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THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

The principal aim and object of this Society is to form the nucleus of a Universal Brotherhood of Humanity, without distinction of race, creed, sex, caste or colour. The subsidiary objects are: The study of ancient and modern religions, philosophies and sciences, and the demonstration of the importance of such study; and the investigation of the unexplained laws of nature and the psychical powers latent in man.

*The* THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY *is the official organ of the original Theosophical Society founded in New York by H. P. Blavatsky, W. Q. Judge and others, in 1875.*

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EDITORS, THE THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY.

# NOTES AND COMMENTS

## JANUARY, 1933

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### Theosophy and Foreign Missions

MANY students of Theosophy have reason to believe that the great religions of the world reveal, as their common and fundamental principle, "that spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul which is the basis of true brotherhood". They explain this underlying oneness by the tradition, recorded by Madame Blavatsky, that every real religion was founded by the Lodge, the Great Brotherhood, to which belong all the Saviours of humanity. In other words, the inner life of the various forms of religion is one and the same, because it is an undivided part of the united life of the Lodge. The outer forms themselves differ, according to the racial and temporal conditions determining their growth, but each form contains within itself the same vital principle.

This principle is not a colourless abstraction. In so far as it has any significance for us, it is vibrant with an intense and *individual* life. It has been said that the spiritual identity of all Souls with the Oversoul is only possible when each Soul has attained a certain measure of real individuality. The inner life of all forms of religion, though one and the same, has a distinctive quality in each of its "incarnations", the stamp of genius which marks every true work of art. A real religion is, indeed, a work of art, the unique creation of an individual Master who acts as a Mediator between the Lodge and the human group or race over which he presides. Nature is not monotonous on any plane. When one compares Buddhism and Christianity, for instance, one discovers the same basic truths, but at the same time the greatest divergence of expression and emphasis.

If the human race were more highly evolved than it actually is, competitive bidding for converts by the various religions would be inconceivable, for each individual would be aware, in some degree, of the "Ray" of the Logos to which he belonged. But most people have so little spiritual individuality that it cannot matter greatly whether they be nominally Buddhists or Mohammedans or

Christians. What is important is that they should have some real religious attachment. When an exoteric religion becomes hopelessly corrupt or virtually extinct, it is in the order of Nature for another to take its place.

Therefore, the missionary has his appointed rôle in the evolution of religious consciousness. This is obvious when he is a man of genius, like St. Paul, or the great Buddhist apostle to China, Bodhidharma. But he has often done good when one would least expect it, when his motives were confused and impure. It is hard to deny, for example, that the Catholicism of the Spanish Conquistadores, though bigoted and cruel, was a vast improvement over the sorcery and human sacrifice of the Aztecs. Again, he may be helpful in ways which he does not intend, as in Japan, where the rivalry of the Christian missions has been instrumental in stimulating the Buddhists to begin a profound study of their own religion.

Nevertheless, from a Theosophical point of view, the Christian missionary has built up for himself an unenviable reputation for ignorance and narrow-mindedness. There are exceptions, of course, many of them, but in general it seems to be only too true that the average missionary has made no distinction between the Noble Eightfold Path of Buddhism and the rites of "Mumbo-Jumbo", for he has regarded all non-Christian cults alike, as special creations of the Evil One. Religious tolerance has certainly not been one of his virtues.

### An Advance Towards Religious Tolerance

However, powerful undercurrents of thought have been active, and there is evidence of a changed attitude towards other religions by those who are responsible for the direction of Foreign Missions. We quote excerpts from the report of the appraisal commission of the Laymen's Foreign Missions Inquiry. The commission, consisting of representatives from seven Protestant denominations, recently returned from a nine months' sojourn in China, Japan, India, and Burma. Their report has been published with the title, *Re-thinking Missions*, by Harper and Brothers.

> At the beginning of our century of Protestant missions, Christianity found itself addressing men attached to other religions; its argument was with those religions. At present it confronts a growing number of persons, especially among the thoughtful, critical of or hostile to all religion.
>
> Its further argument, we judge, is to be less with Islam or Hinduism or Buddhism than with materialism, secularism, naturalism. The growth of this third factor, non-religion, alters the relation of the other two; Christianity and the environing religions face at the same moment the same menace, the spread of the secular spirit; the former opponents have become to this extent allied by the common task. . . . What becomes of the issues between the merits of one sacred text and another when the sacredness of all texts is being denied? . . .
>
> The chief foe of these oracles [i.e., the religions of the East] is not Christianity, but the philosophies of Marx, Lenin, Russell. The case that must now be stated is the case for any religion at all.

> Thus it is that Christianity finds itself in point of fact aligned in the worldwide issue with the non-Christian faiths of Asia. It is an alignment which solves no problems of religious difference, but simply shows how necessary it has become for every religion to be aware of and to stand upon the common ground of all religion. . . .
>
> [It is necessary] that the modern mission make a positive effort, first of all to know and understand the religions around it, and then to recognize and associate itself with whatever kindred elements there are in them. . . . If a new idea is to take sturdy root it should make maximum use of whatever kindred ideas have been there before. . . . It is not what is weak or corrupt but what is strong and sound in the non-Christian religions that offers the best hearing for whatever Christianity may have to say.
>
> It is clearly not the duty of the Christian missionary to attack the non-Christian systems of religion. It is his primary duty to present his conception of the true way of life and let it speak for itself (Chapter II).

The common sense of this appeal is obvious, for it is a fact that both East and West are threatened by materialism masquerading under many forms. Doubtless, it is a call for an inter-religious armistice rather than for permanent peace. These churchmen are still far from the point where they can think of the Buddha and the Christ as really comparable. They may recognize the spiritual genius of the Buddha; but their idea of the Master Christ is almost inevitably coloured by all sorts of theological preconceptions, and they have not heard or apprehended the doctrine of the Lodge.

In spite of their reservations, however, they seem to have made a real advance along proper lines towards religious tolerance. It remains to be seen whether their proposals will bear fruit. Already some missionaries are making "a positive effort to know and understand the religions" with which they come into contact. One of them in particular, recounting a conversation with a Shin Buddhist priest in Japan, says that he found "an unworked mine of spiritual possibilities". Such a remark is enough to have made some of his predecessors turn over in their graves. One hopes that it is really typical of a new spirit of enlightened interest in other creeds, among the "ambassadors" of the Christian Churches in the Far East.

### The Illusion of Humanitarianism

Unfortunately, the standard set by these arguments for tolerance and co-operation is not maintained in the remainder of the report. The commission professes to condemn materialism and secularism, but they might profit by meditation upon the words: "Physician, heal thyself". They practically recommend that the major activities of the missions should henceforth be confined to social service and humanitarian work.

> Ministry to the secular needs of men in the spirit of Christ . . . *is* evangelism, in the right sense of the word; to the Christian no philanthropy can be mere secular relief, for with the good offered

> there is conveyed the temper of the offering, and only because of this does the service become wholly good.
>
> We believe that the time has come to set the educational and other philanthropic aspects of mission work free from organized responsibility to the work of conscious and direct evangelism. We must work with greater faith in invisible successes, be willing to give largely without any preaching, to co-operate whole-heartedly with non-Christian agencies for social improvement, and to foster the initiative of the Orient in defining the ways in which we shall be invited to help (p. 326).

If there must be a choice between the old-fashioned methods of conversion and the methods of the social reformer, we frankly prefer the former, and believe that spiritually they are far less dangerous and may even produce good. It reveals a complete misunderstanding of the Christian Master's message, to assume that the first duty of the disciple is to go everywhere, ameliorating material conditions. A man whose only idea is to minister to the physical wants of others may be personally a saint, but in the end he may cause as much trouble as a devil. An illustration is afforded by the present state of China. It is impossible to calculate the damage already accomplished by the attempts of missionaries to extend to the Chinese the "advantages" of a secular Western education.

The words of Christ are in complete accord with the Indian saying, used as a text by Emerson, that the Universe exists for the purposes of Soul. Karma—that is to say, the Divine Will—places the incarnate soul in an environment adapted to its needs, and the true philanthropist is careful not to interfere with the wise processes of Nature. This is no argument for hardness of heart or for refusal to assist another in distress. The point is that it is not Christian but materialistic to regard "ministry to the secular needs of men" as an end in itself. It would seem that the Laymen's commission have forgotten that the function of a religion is to respond to the needs of the soul, and to concern itself with the body only in so far as its well-being is necessary to the soul. A religion which ceases to fulfill this function will also cease to exist, because its reason for existing will have disappeared.

### A Model for Missionary Activity

Surely one can be a missionary without being either a sectarian bigot or a semi-socialistic humanitarian. We suggest that Madame Blavatsky's work was a model for missionary activity. She brought to Europe and America ideas which were old in the East but new to the West. As a result of what she accomplished, many have found a deeper meaning in truths which were familiar to them; and also have learned other truths which are absent from the *exoteric* religious and philosophical tradition of the Occident. They have not become Buddhists, but they have been given an opportunity to assimilate some of the qualities and virtues of Buddhism.

Why should it be impossible for an apostle of Christianity to do for the East

what Madame Blavatsky did for the West? Through the teaching of such a man, new spiritual perspectives might be opened to the vision of Orientals, and they might be helped to discover profundities which they had never suspected beneath the surface of their exoteric creeds. In brief, what is needed is a missionary who really understands Christianity,—as Madame Blavatsky understood esoteric Buddhism and Hinduism.

### Co-operation and Competition

Philosophers since the beginning of history have dreamed of an ideal commonwealth where all men would freely co-operate towards the fulfilment of the great destiny reserved for humanity. It is a noble dream, and possibly this planet continues to exist in order that some day it may come true. But the Golden Age as an actual condition belongs to the remote past or to the remote future. We are living in Kali Yuga, the Age of Iron, and we shall be wise not to forget it for an instant.

At the present stage of human evolution, competition and strife are inseparable from human existence. Pacifists and internationalists may protest, and economists and efficiency engineers may argue, but men continue to compete and to strive with one another, not only because they instinctively enjoy a fight, but because they have no alternative if they desire to go on living. Many minds have, therefore, been tormented by what seems to be a hopeless paradox. How can humanity become a Brotherhood when Nature imposes struggle and war as the price of existence?

It is a searching question, but it is not without an answer. Indeed, there have been wise men in every age who have replied to it, and in all cases the responses have been essentially the same. For example, there was Heraclitus in ancient Greece. "Men do not understand", he said, "how that which is torn in different directions comes into accord with itself,—harmony in contrariety, as when one bends the bow. Opposition brings men together, and out of discord comes the purest concord, and all things have their birth in strife. So war is the father of all and king of all, and some he has made Gods and some men, some bound and some freed."

Before men can co-operate as in the Golden Age, they must become really human, and that involves more than is generally imagined. Birth in human shape is not sufficient to provide one with a diploma of humanity. As has been said, only a Master is a human being, in the truest sense of the term, for only a Master's humanity is complete and unalloyed. One does not wonder that such men as Gautama and Jesus have been called Gods by their followers; but it seems more pertinent to think of them as perfected men.

Whether they be named Gods or men, the Masters have become what they are by the agency of "War, the father of all and king of all". Their qualities are those which we intuitively attribute to the righteous warrior,—loyalty, courage, compassion for the weak, wisdom, concentrated power. These virtues could not have sprung up in their consciousness by some sudden miracle. Like all the attributes of being, they are products of Karma, of action. The Masters

can co-operate spontaneously, without stress or friction, because they have learned the intent of Nature through their age-long experience of war.

### When Nature Clashes with Economics

It is well to remember, in these difficult times, that "out of discord comes the purest concord". Sir Arthur Keith, the British anthropologist, seems to have been moved by such a consideration when he prepared a recent article for the *New York Times* Magazine (October 2, 1932), to which the editor gave the appropriate heading: "When Nature Clashes with Economics".

As Sir Arthur notes, many professors of economics seem to imagine that the major cause of the prolongation of the present depression is what they call "the disease of nationalism". If they could really have their way, one surmises that they would abolish national boundaries, convert the whole human race into one family having a common standard of living, and perhaps even compel everybody to speak one language. If this or something approximating to it should happen, so they argue, trade would begin to flow through the old international channels and we should all live happily ever afterwards. Perhaps we should, but as Sir Arthur points out, there is practically no chance of our witnessing such an experiment. Nature evidently has other plans for us, and in the end Nature always wins. Sir Arthur actually reminds one of a Taoist in his insistence upon the uselessness of the human reason when it sets itself in opposition to natural "design". He almost goes so far as to attribute to Nature a divine foresight and wisdom.

> What, then, is wrong with the world? To me the answer is clear. Man has been seeking after false gods—power, trade and wealth. And nature is now bringing him to book. Business men and philanthropists dream of a world State through which trade will flow with the utmost freedom. They demand universal peace and eternal security. They want to see mankind regimented into a single uniform nationality.
>
> As I read the book of creation, all of these postulates are anathema to the order of nature. Nature has so ordered things that ultimately mankind must carry out her scheme, which is the production of manhood. For this reason she demands that the world should be broken up into a multitude of separate, self-contained nationalities. She demands courage, sacrifice and competition; she refuses to give security, even of life, to her competing teams. Danger keeps them alert.
>
> Nature scoffs at the laws of economics. Nationalism is nature's call, and it is just because she has called, that an economic disaster has fallen on us. We have to suffer until we accommodate our lives to the conditions of self-contained nationalities. . . .
>
> My readers may remember the last episode in the life of Jeremiah. The leaders of the remnant of the children of Judah resolved to seek safety in Egypt. Egypt could offer them what men and women crave for most: security—security of life, security of property, security of personal comfort.
>
> Having made up their minds, the leaders asked Jeremiah to

> approach the Lord to ascertain the divine will. When Jeremiah declared unto them that it was God's will that the remnant should remain in Palestine and face danger and hardship, the "proud men" rose up. "Thou speakest falsely", they exclaimed. . . .
>
> I know very well that when I counsel men to face the dangers and poverty of nationalism rather than flee to Geneva for safety, the "proud men" will again rise up and say: "Thou liest". Nevertheless, sooner or later my words will come true.
>
> Who among us does not long for a "soft job" in life—one by which for a modicum of work we are assured food, raiment, home-life and leisure for all our days? Yet we also realize that such a mode of life, free from risk and lacking in incentive, leaves the best that is in us undeveloped.

We believe that these are healthy words well spoken. One thing is certain. The internationalism of to-day is almost without exception either grossly materialistic in its aims or a mere "slopping over" of pacifist sentimentality. There can be no union of Souls by such a medium as this. Before we can become Brothers in a true and inward sense, we must completely evolve out of the semi-animal state in which we now are. There can be little doubt that nationalism, with its "dangers and poverty", is one of Nature's means of converting potential human beings into human souls; nor is it reasonable to attack nationalistic sentiment and patriotism because they may be turned towards evil as well as towards good. Duality is a quality of all manifested things.

As we began by saying, there is an ideal of true internationalism, an ideal which we believe to be realized in the Lodge, where there is a maximum of individuality and of "nationality", at the same time that there is a maximum of co-operative effort inspired by perfect unity of heart. But the Lodge was founded neither by professors of economics nor by "augurs of Geneva".

## Economic Planning

One of the curiosities of our century is the "confusion of castes". It is not unusual to find a man of science or a banker upholding the standards of the Soul, while material ends and values are fluently defended by someone whose official business is religion.

We have noted Sir Arthur Keith's view of the depression as a great test imposed upon evolving humanity by Nature. Now, by contrast, let us turn to what was recently said upon this same subject of depressions by Dr. Harry Emerson Fosdick, pastor of the Riverside Church, New York. Dr. Fosdick seems to fancy that by some sort of economic planning it will be possible to prevent the recurrence of business cycles with all the troubles which accompany them. We quote from a sermon reported in *The New York Times* (November 7, 1932):

> We hear so many dark outlooks on the future that we may well set over against them another kind of outlook altogether. John Maynard Keynes, one of the ablest economists in the world, says that a hundred years from now there will be no economic problem. . . . As a matter of fact, that prophecy is sensible, and is clearly

> within our power to fulfil. There are just two major problems in economics: the problem of producing enough goods for other people, and the problem of distributing the goods so that all the people will get them. Already we have solved the first. . . .
>
> With our new machinery, we can produce enough goods with a few hours' work a day per man to care for all the world, and that took brains, magnificent brains! If now the desperate need of being saved from an utter breakdown of our social order can weigh heavily enough on our consciences so that our intelligence is conscripted for social use, so that the same kind of scientific and business brain power which solved the problem of production is set to solve the problem of distribution, until wealth becomes common wealth and all the people share in the goods which they help to create, then a hundred years from now there will be no economic problem.

Dr. Fosdick who is, after all, a clergyman, adds that "a final thing" must of course be included to make this Utopia complete. "We must as persons and as a nation be born again into a better spirit", for "mankind still needs nothing quite so much as to be saved into the spirit of Christ".

These concluding platitudes, in our opinion, serve only to bring out more distinctly the materialistic bias of his thought. What justification is there for supposing that the "spirit of Christ" is in any way associated with the schemes of economists to reduce the whole earth to one dead level of security and comfort? Dr. Fosdick, like so many others of his cloth, has failed to perceive that suffering is not an abnormality; that it is an altogether normal constituent of physical existence. Any Buddhist could have told him this, but he need not go to the Buddha for instruction. The great drama of the Christian Master's life is an illustration of the doctrine that birth and life and death are suffering;—it is *by means of suffering* that the mortal puts on immortality. Indeed, there can be no more perilous illusion than the fancy that the ascent of consciousness to the level of Divine Humanity is easy and painless, and that in the future the aspirant will at least be spared the worries incidental to poverty or to panics in the stock market. The Mohammedans have preserved a saying of Christ which might well be carved in stone above the portals of our churches: "Life is a bridge; pass over it; do not build upon it."

But there is another mode of approach to this whole problem of economic planning. Some things are impossible, and the most impossible of all is any sort of effective opposition to spiritual and natural law. We cannot conceive of any permanent way of "distributing the goods so that all the people will get them", until all the people are safe and sound in Nirvâna. The reason for this certain failure is that Nature uses sorrow and privation as nourishment for the Soul. As a Hindu would say, it may be the Karma of many people to be deprived of the goods of this world. To put it crudely, they may deserve to be deprived of them. If in spite of this decree of Divine Justice, goods be forced upon them by economists or by sentimentalists, the operation of the law of supply and demand on inner planes will be thrown into disorder. Anyone who believes that economic law is an expression of spiritual law, cannot doubt that

sooner or later this "astral" confusion will be projected in catastrophic form on the physical plane; as a moral disease tends to work outwards through the body until it culminates in a physical ailment.

Such ideas may appear harsh, but they are not original, for they are to be found in every real religion and in every real ethical system. Divine Charity and Compassion cannot be conceived apart from Divine Justice. At the time of the great earthquake of 1923 in Tokyo, some missionaries, whose minds were not as clear as they might have been, assured the Japanese that God did not cause the earthquake, but "Nature". But the Japanese, like most Orientals, found themselves unable to separate Divinity from "Nature". They said that the earthquake was an effect of the Good Law, since it forcibly drew their attention to the materialism that threatened their civilization and gave them an opportunity to re-create a noble national ideal.

To return to economic planning, no one will deny that there is room for improvement in our actual methods of distribution. There are phases of the unemployment problem which can and ought to be solved. But even our present anarchy is preferable to what must happen if human society should fall into the hands of a few socialistic fanatics with a "general staff" of engineers. If we assume that the units of the human race are potential Souls, it is apparent that any scheme of social change which involves injustice to the individual, or which obstructs individual development, is doomed to failure. One recalls the splendid ideal of the Roman Law: "To give to every man his due". In the new economic order which Dr. Fosdick prophesies, who will have the duty of determining for every man his due? A committee of professors, or a gang of politicians, or a group of bitter and cruel dogmatists such as governs Soviet Russia?

## Economic Law and Moral Law

As has been said many times, the supreme need is for "God-instructed men" to govern the nations; for those who can co-operate with the divine purpose of Nature because they understand it. But before such rulers can take their rightful place, men must pray for their coming, and to pray effectively they must labour to prepare their own minds for the reception of the truths for which an "Adept King" would stand.

There is evidence, here and there, that some people have really begun this work of mental preparation,—perhaps, more people than one imagines. As a remarkable example of lucid thinking upon economic issues, we refer to the *Bulletin* of the National City Bank of New York for August, 1932.

We wish to quote two passages from this *Bulletin*. The first may not appear *à propos* of our principal subject, but we give it here because it reveals such a clear and just view of the problem of the Inter-Allied Debts, and suggests a solution in accord with the moral principle involved.

> It is unjust to say that they [the French] are unwilling to make concessions to Germany unless they can pass the cost on to the United States, for France has assented to a concession to Germany

> which, upon the assumption that all obligations are worth their face value, is much larger than her debt to the United States. Her claims upon Germany under the Young Plan aggregate over $14,000,000,000, while her annuities to the United States under the debt settlement aggregate only $6,840,000,000. The Lausanne terms of settlement would give her 52% of $714,000,000. Therefore if the United States should cancel the French debt *in toto* it would wipe out only about one-half the sum that France forgives to Germany. And it is not out of place to add that in one case the forgiveness would be bestowed upon a friend and associate in the war, and in the other case upon an enemy country.

The other passage might be a commentary upon the fundamental tenet of the Roman Law which has been cited. The writer says, with special reference to the fact that, in certain trades, wages are inordinately and irrationally high:

> This is unfair, and not only unfair but unworkable, for the economic law does not permit it. If the wage-earners could pick their gains out of the sky, they might enjoy them, but when they come out of other sections of the population, the loss of purchasing power by the latter inevitably forces wage-earners out of employment, as witnessed in the last two years. It has upset the "sound, fair, balance" in the industrial system. *The whole situation affords another demonstration that the basis of sound economics is the moral law. In truth, the economic and the moral law are one and the same.*

---

*And the Kingdom of Heaven is within you, and whosoever shall know himself shall find it; for if ye shall truly know yourselves, ye are the sons and daughters of the Father Almighty, and ye shall know yourselves to be in the city of God, and ye are the city.*—SAYINGS OF JESUS DISCOVERED IN EGYPT IN 1904.

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*Political liberty does not consist in a man doing what he wishes, but in his being able to do what he ought to wish.*—MONTESQUIEU.

# FRAGMENTS

DUTIES are not things of the heart, but of the hands. They are to be performed faithfully and exactly, but with detachment; for love of the Master, not for love of them. In this way the smallest is made sublime; otherwise their performance is but part of the dust and ashes of Earth.

---

Do not be small; be large. Expand to the blue of the sky, the depth of the ocean, the snow-covered peaks of the mountains. Step out from personality into the wide and open areas of Life. Why always within four walls, instead of the circle of God's circumference?

---

Morning and noon and evening, pulsing spring and full-blown summer, still autumn, and stiller winter with the living heart; youth with its promise and opportunity, maturity with its power, age with its harvests of fruit or thistles: these are the phantasmagoria of time that pass and repass, in braided harmony and loveliness, across the luminous mist that veils the changelessness of the Eternal. Illusions all, yet reflections of Reality; else how could they exist? For Beauty is always real, since inseparable from the True as from the Good; and no Beauty ever dies, or passes, or changes,—save to be more beautiful. In the passing the illusion lies; in the remaining lies reality.

---

Last night while the stars were singing, there appeared to be joy amongst them, as if one of their number had attained; and great thanksgiving arose as he passed onward to his goal. A Planetary Spirit, clothed in the new radiancy of his achievement, swept upward into uncharted regions of ether. The waves of glory that followed him beat upon the utmost confines of Space, rocking the constellations; and, returning, lapped in reflected rhythm against even the shores of Earth. So that some were drawn up, of which the stars sang as well, and others were drawn back; therefore while the stars sang on, men were fearful.

He who saw those prodigies in the sky saw also the gloom and confusion upon Earth; saw the blackness against the light, saw the vain against the true, saw the terror and dismay, which were only *shadows of glory:* and seeing, he understood and remembered and would pass the word.

CAVÉ.

# LETTERS FROM W. Q. JUDGE

## VII

THE lecturing tour was continued. After Toronto, Buffalo was again visited; then Jamestown (a lecture in the Independent Congregational Church); then Sandusky. On November 1st, Toledo, with two lectures in the Unitarian Church, which were reported at length and in a most friendly way in the local newspapers. From the 6th to the 10th, at Fort Wayne, with three public lectures besides other meetings, the newspapers again most friendly. Next, Columbus, lecturing twice in the Y.M.C.A. Hall, and so to Cincinnati, with lectures and meetings from November 13th to 18th, under the auspices of Dr. Buck. Following this, came St. Louis, Kansas City, Memphis, Nashville, and New Orleans (December 9th), where three public lectures were given, the third attended by just ten times as many people as the first (40 to 400), as the result of an attack on Theosophy in one of the local papers. Finally, before reaching Aiken, S. C., where Judge was then staying, lectures were given and meetings held at Macon, between December 17th and 22nd.

Ill as he was, and in constant pain, Judge followed all this with intense and active interest, as his letters show. Theosophy was the passion of his life. He created a current—very deep and therefore almost invisible except in its effects—which carried along with it all those who shared even a glimmer of the same love with him.

It was at Providence, I think, that the members charged admission to one of my lectures, turning over to me, as a contribution to the Headquarters' Lecturing Fund, after paying for the hall, tickets, and advertizing, the ten dollars to which the following letter refers with such amusement.

Judge encouraged me to write to him fully and freely about the different Branches and the members I met, and later, when I stayed with him at Aiken, checked my impressions at length. "The Bostonians" of the present letter included especially George Ayers (Malden), Louis Wade and Robert Crosbie. Wade, although a "bull", as Judge had remarked in an earlier letter, had a touch of genius and a delightful sense of humour,—a characteristic which the others lacked. Like the others, he was self-opinionated, but more amenable because fundamentally free from conceit. Crosbie, with a gentle, pleasing personality, was very psychic, and took his psychism seriously, which of course impressed the feeble-minded. Judge, knowing how "impressionable" Crosbie was, did what he could to safe-guard the situation, both for the Work's sake and for Crosbie's, and, while he lived, held things in check; but after Judge's death, there was trouble, and Crosbie left Boston under a cloud. Some years later, in California, he announced himself, or allowed himself to be announced, as a chêla of Judge's, which was nonsense, for he was no more that than was Wade or Ayers, or Purman of Fort Wayne or Wright of Chicago or Thurston of

Providence or any other of the fifty men upon whom Judge counted, but whose understanding of his inner life—as he painfully realized—was nil. Although Crosbie perhaps did not suspect his own motive, the fact is that this claim insured him a comfortable living for the rest of his life,—an extraordinary kind of "chêlaship"!

At the time of my visit to Boston, however, Crosbie, although President of the Branch, was merely one worker among many, and the Branch as a whole was probably the largest and most active after the Aryan of New York. Wade alone would have supplied the fire and energy for a dozen Branches, while the average of the membership was extraordinarily good.

[Postmarked] Asheville, N. C., October 16th, 1895.

Dear Ernest,

Just got yours from Syracuse. You will get one at Buffalo. C.F.W.'s lecture was a success, although only 175 people were there, where 1,500 ought to be.

Ha! ha! your first money? Is it so? If so, do tell the Ks. That $10 fruit of your brain and your bent legs is worth 500. Glad of it. It is an omen—good. How did you feel over it, and did you make an ass of yourself in the way you took, just as Cæsar gently, all too so, put back the crown?

Your judgments of the Bostonians are correct. Richardson is what you say. Oh it's a strong movement. At that instant, as I wrote, my jigaree exploded a loud and fine metallic crack close by.

Good Lord, what a world. I am (for a long time) much occupied thinking of the mental development of the day, and how we might best affect it more. It is a big question, and I don't think the T.S. can by any means do it alone. There's an idea in me struggling to get out. Do you get it? I can't yet. But it is high and mighty. I don't think India is in it at all, but Europe and U. S. If I could only get at it. We are a lot of poor devils anyway, so go on and lecture.

Adieu,

Q.

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Judge enclosed the following undated note with a letter received by him from W. W. Harmon, President of the Malden Branch, requesting me to convey his answer either orally or in writing. It is a good indication of the way Judge handled "Branch troubles".

Harmon.—Express sorrow. It must be obvious that I can do nothing unless I can use names. Will he therefore consent to my saying to Ayers and anyone else he names as the offender, that he has so written, and thus focus the matter. There is no other way. I have given no orders, suggestions or indications there to anyone, save that I disapproved bad business policy and debts. Or, take another way. Say boldly to those you [Harmon] mean, that you [Harmon] have written me that letter. Surely 3 or 4 can't be a majority.

Following the Boston Convention of April, 1895, the reorganization of the Movement which resulted, and the election of Judge as President of the Theosophical Society in Europe, he was called upon to deal with many Constitutional and similar matters which arose in the various national sections. As a lawyer, he did not always find the procedure followed, either logical or simple, as this note witnesses:

These, received from ——, are forwarded E.T.H. as he has a hand in the matter. When done with them, send on to C.F.W. as by request of W.Q.J. so that they may be filed among my European T.S. archives (if any). As usual they have gone ahead piecemeal, and it will all be a patchwork like the laws of England. Oh gawd!

No news.

As ever,

Q.

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Judge's enemies never tire of asserting that he "consulted mediums" and was "guided" by them. Judge did not consult mediums, and although he was pursued by psychics with their special revelations, he practised what he preached, and "tested all things" with unfailing detachment and clarity. Mrs. McKinstry was one of those who have been named as "influencing" him. The following letter should indicate how absurd the accusation is. Judge had sent me some of her lucubrations—partly, for me to practise on—and the opinion I sent him, with my reasons for it, which Judge approved, would not have pleased their author.

[Postmarked] ASHEVILLE, N. C., October 26th, 1895.

Dear Chew Yew,

Read enclosed and then return to me. The envelope is the one in which came the paper by Omega. It was sent over to me by ——, who seems affected by it. I am not, but see ignorance and fraud in it. I want your intuition also on it, and on the affair which C.F.W.'s letter details. Be as clear about the Omega thing as you were about McKinstry. Meant to write you a long letter but can't. Just got yours from Toronto. I send this to Stevens [Buffalo]. I want Omega paper back soon, as I may want to use it in *Path* some way.

As ever,

Q.

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As explained in an earlier instalment, lecturing tours were supposed to pay for themselves, each Branch visited contributing the cost of transportation to the next Branch. I had sent Judge a statement of expenses and receipts, adding: "I yet have 2 dollars surplus on travel excluding the $50" [advanced by the Headquarters' Lecturing Fund, when I started from New York]. Judge, on a slip, wrote: "Does this mean you have the 50 yet? If so, why not say so; I cannot tell." It did mean that: but how he hated ambiguity!

[Postmarked] AIKEN, S. C., October 29th, 1895.

Dear Ernest,

Don't feel well, so write briefly. Yours about Harding, and enclosing the financial statement, I was to reply to by wire. But on reading it I think it unnecessary to wire. You and Harding will not clash even if you do meet. But you cannot expect payments by Columbus, Dayton or Toledo. Toledo alone paid in $168 to the Committee Harding is under.

Before you plan beyond Kansas City I want you to let me know. I have to write to Lopez in New Orleans. There is a Branch at Macon, Georgia, not far from here; they are active and good. Please write C.F.W. for particulars as to places between Kansas City and New Orleans.

Be sure at Cincinnati to say nothing about money. They are large, but poor, and most of it falls on few, who are just now hard up.

I know your trip is going off well, and hope you will get all valuable experience possible out of it.

The financial statement is very encouraging, is it not? God looks after his sparrows and hawks.

What you say of Toronto kickers is what I thought. It is true of all. Don't spit on or kick any such, but don't go off to labor with them. If there is a ghost of a show for such to return, it will be voluntary. Glad you thus again agree fundamentally with me. There is a similar condition in Toledo, only the kickers are self-satisfied prigs.

Well, I'll get down to a longer letter later. Meanwhile I am always regarding you and your shadow on the wall.

As ever,

W.Q.J.

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[Postmarked] AIKEN, S. C., November 4th, 1895.

Dear Ernest,

The enclosed from your folks was misdirected by Claude. It was at a time he was sending me many letters. I got it this a.m., and send it out to you the same p.m. There is only one mail out per day.

I am away in the rear with my *Path* work, and not yet have had time to write you. Have you yet received from me "Omega's" paper?

Harding says that Columbus wants only one; so if you like, avoid it.

I hear that Sturdy brought over Vivekananda to London from here, and the sly fellow is now smashing at Theosophy. It will do good, as all such attacks do, though the faithful are now and then scared. Arch and J.C.K. say the throat-cutting still goes on—God bless them. It was really a good thing that the Burrows ass didn't bray until he did. He has done those people much wounding indeed. In various other ways, hell is threatened to the crew all round.

Well, adieu again, and may you be blessed.

As ever,

Ψ.

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[Postmarked] AIKEN, S. C., November 5th, 1895.

Dear Ernest,

Just got your article. Thanks. Very good. But it's less than 2 pages. I am stuck all the time. For each article try and make 3 pp. at least, or 1,500 words (500 to the printed page). It is very timely. Write as often as a good idea strikes, and if I get a small stock on hand, all the better. We must get in now and then, article or articles on some striking point. There are several.

Now I like the yellow ruled paper your article is written on, and wish you would send me some or tell me where to get it. I don't want much at first as I wish to try it.

Just glance at what I have to do medically:
Water, drink 4 times a day. Carbon pills.
Hepar Sulph. and Phos.—homeopathic.
Oxygen, inhale 3 times.
Lynosulfite, inhale as often as you can.
Listerine, gargle to try to stop sore throat.
Some d—— thing after meals.
Hot treatment nightly.
Be in the open air all the time.
Where does the *Path*, etc. come in.

As ever,

Ψ.

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[Postmarked] AIKEN, S. C., November 5th, 1895.

Dear Ernest,

It is delightful to get that letter from Toledo returning Omega's paper. Am very glad to see that you are succeeding. But I expected it. Two things are being thereby done. You are doing them good and getting experience yourself. And it is not at all subsidiary that you are making personal acquaintance with our people. That will be needed in the future. Besides, it becomes a fine connecting thread with each one. And among them you will find some men whom it will be well to have as friends.

I know your experience exactly with letters and private talks. They are such idiots. It is the personal element, and you must always look out. "Eternal vigilance is the price of liberty." A gentle reply is enough. Not every question has to be answered. And if I could I would not reply to *any* letters from women, except on business. Give them no holy talk in letters: it reads badly after-

wards. I am simply telling you my ideas, as it is possible you know all this yourself.

Make yourself especially kind and friendly with Buck, and be as nice as possible with the family. I do not say this because you wouldn't, but for other reasons. As I know nearly all the people you are seeing, I have considerable fun with myself about it, as I can see exactly the effect. All you have to do is to see it does not hurt you via vanity, and, second, that you do not get contemptuous.

Now my boy one person in writing, casually said you stooped a little. Ha! ha! You must look out for this; and you *must* draw up to the last inch. How many years will it take to drive the fact into your head that, aside from health, you look better when all your inches are straight? And this holy war demands the use of every element and factor. If you do not fix this matter we will call you, "The stooping Theosophist". The person who spoke of this is Mrs. Fenton, who wanted an explanation of the wonderful thing, etc. [This did not refer to the stooping!] I told her it was the impression of the picture on her senses, and not to make mystery, and that it was recorded of Webster and others that they changed when speaking on great subjects.

I will write to Constance [one of my sisters, a devoted member of the Society, who died a number of years ago].

Now for Omega. I think you are right. I can't catch the clues, but your analysis is so good it must be true. My own judgment was that the writer knew a lot by reading, but not enough to avoid a lot of errors, and that the list of names would be a grand clue to some one. There is gush in it also. It is singular that —— was to some extent taken in by it. I wrote yesterday saying the paper was bosh, but couldn't go into your details as I knew no one. I discarded A.P.S. [Sinnett], I.C.O. [Mrs. Cooper-Oakley] etc., one after the other. Have no news from the New York episode. Guess you are right there too, as the large money could only exist in summerland, and no one who knows me would dare to think they could have any influence in this case by any talk of money.

I feel very pleased and justified in you after this reply on Omega. You may know why, and you may not; the fact remains.

As to your father, I can't say. When I first heard of him I felt he was not a long liver, but in "the matter of hyleg", or of life and death, no prognostication is reliable.

Can't say much as to W.Q.J. Varying days. Much bronchial cough; fits of indigestion; bad nights; good days. Damn mess. Voice gone absolutely, etc. Got the digestive tract all squee-gee and am trying to right it. Look out for yourself and see that you have good digestion and good enough exercise. Doesn't seem that climates are of any value. I haven't got better anywhere but in Cincinnati and New York, neither having any climate to speak of.

Your southern trip will not be so much as the others. You have only Memphis, Nashville, Macon, New Orleans, Washington and Baltimore. The south

is petrified in orthodoxy, and is full of niggers. It has always been weak for T.S. But I expect great good to result from your work even there. You must say I sent you to these places. I hope I shall be near enough to see you. If I am here when you are in Macon, that is not far from here. Good-bye.

As ever,

W.

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[Postmarked] AIKEN, S. C., November 15th, 1895.

Dear Ernest,

I enclose question for *Forum*. Will you please write out a good answer and send on to C.F.W. for *Forum*, saying I asked you to do so.

Haven't time to-day to write at length. But I am full of "ideas". The Masonic is, yes, an old scheme; yet it is not given up.

Toledo also writes. The good you are doing is splendid. Don't think of it, but of Master and that friend of yours.

As ever,

W.

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I was in St. Louis when I received Judge's next letter, forwarded to me by Dr. Buck from Cincinnati.

[Postmarked] AIKEN, S. C., November 19th, 1895.

Dear Chewytz,

Don't know where this will catch you. This last from you was done in Columbus and posted Cincinnati. I will send this to J.D. [Buck].

The enclosed I send you to read and destroy now that a sufficient time has elapsed. It came with the fool paper ["Omega's"]. It is a sign I do not like that this mistake was made,—to give so much attention to it. What is the cause, do you suppose?

I have millions of things to say to you that I can't write. I believe I will stay here long enough for you to come here. That will be on way back and I suppose by coming from Macon. I propose that you stay here a week with me, and we can then pow wow to satisfaction. The food and beds here are good, and I don't think all their boarders will be here by that time.

Don't know what you can do at St. Louis. It needs some men of different calibre and stratum. That is the trouble. Some poor devil will some day have to sacrifice himself by going there for a space to try to work it up.

It seems to me you ought now and then to send to your sister at any rate a good newspaper report about you.

Well, no other things. Don't forget a *Path* article.

As ever,

W.

(*To be continued*)

# DESCARTES AND THE EASTERN WISDOM

*Oh, East is East, and West is West, and never the twain shall meet,*
*Till Earth and Sky stand presently at God's great Judgment Seat:*
*But there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth,*
*When two strong men stand face to face, tho' they come from the ends of the earth.*

IT has seemed to many that the hemispheres of our globe are divided by an abyss, by a chasm which no bridge of thought can ever span. It is said that the Occidental can never understand the Oriental, nor the Oriental the Occidental, because they respond to such different motives and dream of such different ideals. Europeans and Americans who are obsessed by the notion that Asiatics live in a separate world, frequently quote the first two lines of Kipling's stanza. They omit or forget the other two.

"East is East, and West is West", but it is unfortunate to imagine a great gulf fixed between them. It would seem that their differences are more aptly described as "differences of polarity". Their thought-processes appear often to start from opposite points in consciousness and to move in inverse direction. One may illustrate what is meant in terms of the laws of reflection. When an object is reflected in a mirror, its image is an exact replica, with one exception. There is a reversal of aspect: the right side appears the left and the left side appears the right. So, if we examine some of the ways in which Eastern and Western minds differ, we shall find that there is no essential contradiction between them, but only a "reversal of aspect". They reach the same terminus though they seem to move away from each other; as two men making the circuit of the earth in opposite directions will ultimately meet.

If one adopt such a method of comparison, many things become clear which have baffled the Orientalists. For example, one no longer has to suppose that the motive which inspires the Buddhist disciple to practise austerities is the assurance that if he persevere to the end he will be completely annihilated. Such has been the supposition of many Occidental scholars, but they would never have fallen into this error, if they had recognized that, exoterically, the Buddhist Way of Salvation is in general outline almost diametrically opposite to the Christian. They have tried to conceive it as if it were a copy or imitation of Christianity, and have not unnaturally been astonished to find that Nirvâna bears no superficial resemblance to the orthodox Christian picture of Paradise. But the apparent contradiction disappears if we consider the actual documentary evidence. This indicates very clearly that the Way of the Buddha, in the phase known to us, is primarily a discipline of *detachment* from form, in particular from the illusion that the separate ego is a reality; while the Way

of the Christ may be described as primarily a discipline of *attachment* to the highest form that can be conceived; the ego or personal self is to be transmuted into a vehicle of Divinity. It is no wonder that Nirvâna, the ideal of "formlessness", seems negative and lifeless to the exoteric Christian; or that to the exoteric Buddhist the Christian emphasis upon personal or formal excellence of conduct seems only to fasten consciousness more securely to the "heresy of separateness".

However, in the last analysis, the difference is only one of emphasis. This is equivalent to saying that as they progress along their respective paths, the Buddhist assimilates the virtues of the Christian, and *vice versa*. They are like two men, one left-handed and the other right-handed, but united by their common destiny, which is to become ambidextrous. Thus it has been said that esoterically Nirvâna and the Kingdom of Heaven are one. "In Heaven", states Plotinus, "the sun is all the other stars, and again each star is the sun. One thing in each is prominent above the rest, but it also shows forth all." This is the state where "there is neither East nor West, Border, nor Breed, nor Birth".

These considerations suggest that the two hemispheres are as complementary in terms of consciousness as they are in terms of geography. The East needs contact with the Western genius for action, to preserve from degeneration its own genius for contemplation; for too often the Oriental confuses quietude and selflessness with their psychic counterfeits, passivity, fatalism, indifference. The whole history of the West shows how easily its love of action is degraded into a restless craving for excitement and sensation. Left to its own devices, the Occidental mind tends to become hard and materialistic; it needs contact with the Eastern genius for contemplation.

According to tradition the Lodge has made several carefully planned attempts to infuse a measure of Eastern thought into the consciousness of the West. At least four of these infusions were followed by marked revivals of spiritual life. There was the movement associated with the name of Orpheus which is connected with the beginnings of Hellenic civilization. There was the work of Pythagoras who gave a definite impetus to the philosophical genius of the Greeks, and who revived the Orphic tradition. There was Christianity which contains so many Oriental elements in spite of its predominantly Western tone. There was the Neoplatonist School which nurtured the genius of Plotinus and which has had so profound an influence upon the history of Christian mysticism.

Many believe that in our own century we are witnesses of another attempt of the same order. If asked to define one ultimate goal of the Theosophical movement, one might reply,—to make manifest the point in spiritual space where East and West meet.

We can illustrate by an historical example what happens even to a very great Western mind when it is virtually closed to all Eastern influences. If René Descartes had studied the work of some one Oriental philosopher, of Shankara Acharya for instance, the whole course of modern philosophy might have been changed. Descartes might have become a mystical philosopher. As it was, he became a brilliant mathematician whose principal avocation was metaphysical

speculation. Unlike some more recent mathematical philosophers, he had an exceptionally clear intellect. He certainly would not have shared Bertrand Russell's notion that mathematicians are the only people in the world who do not have to know what they are talking about. In a sense, his superb lucidity was actually a misfortune, for his works are easy to read and easy to understand; it provided a medium for the quick and wide dissemination of a system of ideas which has had a poisonous influence upon Western thought. He was the father of the mechanistic hypothesis and of many other metaphysical nightmares. Yet, in spite of his rigid rationalism, in spite of the spiritual myopia which dimmed his inner vision, Descartes began his philosophical career with an immediate experience of spiritual truth such as seldom falls to the lot of any philosopher.

The errors of his philosophy may be said to have resulted from his failure to understand the meaning of that experience. But one wonders how, in the circumstances, he could have understood it. If he had sought and discovered the Christian Master, the wisdom which he needed would have been found. But Descartes seems to have had no conception of Christianity apart from the official creed of the Church, to which he was quite indifferent. That is why it was suggested that the work of an Eastern philosopher, with its new mode of approach, might have brought light to his mind.

Descartes describes this crucial moment of his life in the Third Part of the *Discourse on Method*. He explains that he was bewildered and confused by the numerous conflicting conceptions of truth which were prevalent. All of these ideas could not be true, and he could not help wondering whether any of them could be regarded as unassailable. He felt a pressing need for experimental proof that there is such a thing in the universe as a truth which must be accepted as absolute. It was not enough to know the truth; he must know that he knew it,—in other words, he must know it self-consciously.

He proceeded to conduct a very interesting experiment upon himself. "Because our senses deceive us sometimes, I decided to pretend that nothing is what we imagine it to be; and because men deceive themselves in their reasoning, even as regards the simplest matters of geometry, . . . judging that I was as subject to error as any other, I rejected as false every reason which I had formerly taken to be a demonstration; and finally, considering that all the thoughts which we have while awake, can also come to us while asleep, when none of them is true, I resolved to feign that everything which had ever entered my mind was no more true than the illusions of my dreams. But immediately afterwards I took note that while I willed thus to think that everything was false, necessarily I who was thinking these things must be something: . . . *I think, hence I am*, was so firm and so certain that all the most extravagant suppositions of the skeptics could not shatter it, and I judged that I could accept it as the first principle of the philosophy which I was seeking."

Descartes' report of the event is deceptively impersonal and detached. It is quite probable that the experience which he records and which he himself precipitated by concentrated effort, was sufficiently intense to endanger his sanity.

This becomes obvious, when it is realized that, even if but for an instant, Descartes was certain of only a single reality, the reality of his selfhood, of his ego. Traditions of occultism indicate that an overwhelming sense of "I am I" is imposed at one stage or another upon every aspirant to real knowledge, and that the prolonged contemplation of the bare ground of the self brings a sense of solitude which is almost unbearable. But one need not be, in any sense, an extraordinary person to have some idea of what Descartes passed through. Anyone may have a sudden glimpse of the bare ground of the self. It is an experience of which it is exceedingly difficult to speak, for it is as if one were immersed for a fraction of a second in the most profound of mysteries, the *mysterium magnum* itself. Perhaps this explains why Descartes gives so few details. A modern French philosopher has said that the attentive reader often suspects an esoteric substratum beneath the rather prosaic surface of Descartes' description.

The experience of "I am I", if intense enough, forces upon the soul a choice which cannot be evaded. It is like Pascal's "abyss". One must advance or retreat, for no one can remain on the brink and retain control of his faculties. To advance means to extend the zone of pure and immediate experience beyond the sphere of the ego proper. To retreat means to return to the light of common day, to identify the sense of selfhood once more with the mind and the emotional nature and the body, to accept the phenomenal world as it appears to the senses, to seek the comfortable shell of old habits and old beliefs.

Descartes retreated in the end, but not before he had made a further advance. He began to meditate upon the connection between the *self* and the atmosphere of mind-images which surrounds it. He observed that those images are not all of equal value. Pondering upon their source, he was ready to admit that many were reflected from the ground of the self; but there was one idea which persistently entered the field of consciousness and which he could not derive from his ego. This was the idea of a being more perfect than himself.

"To have received it from nowhere was manifestly impossible, and since it is no less repugnant that the more perfect . . . should depend upon the less perfect, . . . I could not have received it from myself; therefore, it must have been implanted in me by a nature which was veritably more perfect than I was, and which indeed had in itself every perfection of which I could have any idea, that is to say, to express myself in a word, which was God."

This experience of the Divine, though according to his fashion he demonstrates it logically, seems to have been as real and as direct as the primary experience of the ground of the self. He was not merely copying the arguments of St. Anselm and Aristotle and Plato. It is clearly attested in the *Méditations Métaphysiques* that Descartes was as certain of the being of God as he was of his own being. He knew that the soul is not alone in an infinity of non-being, for its "aloneness" depends upon the supreme "aloneness" of God.

In a magnificent phrase, Plotinus describes the mystical way as "the flight of the alone to the Alone". Descartes seems actually to have reached a point in consciousness where he possessed certitude as to the eternal reality of the

two terms, but he did not essay the flight. Like Moses, he viewed the Promised Land from a mountain top but descended on the hither slope.

Unlike Moses, he does not appear to have been aware that he actually looked towards the Promised Land. There is no evidence that he tried to repeat his experiment or to broaden its scope. Only one part of his personal nature seems to have been profoundly affected, his mind, which was stimulated to extraordinary activity. But this activity led him into a morass of speculative thought, far from the spiritual height on which he had stood. Doubtless, there was in his intellect no pattern, no mould, to which he could conform his inner experiences. On the other hand, the truths which he had proved could be adopted as axioms, as starting-points for an interminable series of inferences about everything under heaven. He indulged in an orgy of inductive reasoning. By a curious and tragic inversion, spiritual truth served as the basis of one of the most unspiritual systems in the history of thought.

Let us try to imagine what might have occurred if Descartes had had in his mental consciousness some abstract understanding of what happened to him. In such a case, he would have had some dim recognition that the soul and its Divine Master are not two beings, but one; that their apparent duality veils a fundamental unity. But if we accept the testimony of those who have become mystics, this premonition of The One which transcends all duality might have increased, until it became an all-consuming desire to realize that unity here and now by determined effort, as he had already realized the duality which is, in essence, only a *polarization* of The One.

He could have found the necessary formula for his intellect, if he had read such a work as Shankara's *Crest Jewel of Wisdom*,—the *Vivekachudamani*, to give it its Sanskrit name. Shankara teaches the doctrine of the One Self. His treatise is a manual for those who would attempt the flight of the alone to the Alone. It is not suggested that his method is suitable to everyone. His disciples were men of the East, and the practical ideal which he held before them is not unlike that of the Buddha. He stressed detachment, quietude, selflessness. It is not his method, however, which concerns us here, but his general vision of the nature of the Real, and in particular his conception of the relation between the soul and God; for he had the same fundamental experience which came to Descartes,—with this distinction, that he extended it far beyond the range of Descartes' consciousness and resolved its duality into unity.

What Shankara proposes to the student is, in fact, an indefinite extension of the limits of self-consciousness. In this process of progressive introspection and self-examination, the human reason has a most important rôle, but it is the servant of the spiritual will and not its master. It is interesting to note that he uses his mind chiefly to deduce the nature of particulars from general principles. In his thought there is comparatively little inductive inference; that is to say, he does not make a practice, as Descartes did, of inferring the general or universal from the particular. If we understand correctly, the Sanskrit word *Chit*, which is often translated as "intelligence", has a special meaning. It is not an analyzing but a synthesizing power, and seems to denote

a condition in which the Self understands general principles by immediate perception of them. In the Buddhist phrase, the soul sees the Universe face to face. There is no need, then, for inferential reason to prove the existence of any universal principle. When we *see* a tree or a dog, we do not generally feel obliged to demonstrate by a series of syllogisms that it is really there.

In one sense, the purpose of introspection is to enter into the realization of *Chit* or universal knowledge. This knowledge is latent in everyone, and the various modes of spiritual discipline are intended to awaken the soul, by degrees, to an awareness of its own powers. As each degree is attained, the aspirant participates in a greater portion of the universal wisdom, *Brahma Vidya*, and he is thus able to illumine the particular problems confronting him, by reference to his increasing understanding of the general laws which determine all right action.

However, as Shankara describes the way of the disciple, the motive which drives him forward is certainly not desire for personal knowledge, as this is commonly understood. It is defined negatively, as the anguish of the soul when it becomes aware of the glamour which separates it from the Divine Self. That glamour is to be dispelled by the birth of the spiritual will, and by the conversion of the powers of imagination and desire to serve the upbuilding of the Immortal.

Therefore, introspection in the Vedanta is regarded as a creative act, being identical with the transformation of the soul into a series of "impersonations" or forms, each more sensitive and more subtile than its predecessor, until that "formless" state is reached wherein the Individual Self attains full consciousness of its oneness of essence with the Universal Self, the Eternal.

"Freedom from self-indulgence is . . . a surrender of the allurement of all non-eternal things from the body up to the Formative Power, continually made through a realization of the faultiness of all objective things" (22).

"In the text of Scripture, 'That thou art', the Eternal and the Self are indicated by the words, 'That' and 'Thou'; when they are thus understood, the oneness of the Self and the Eternal is clearly seen. . . .

"The seeming difference between the two is caused by the vestures which contain them, but these vestures are themselves unreal. Hear the truth: cosmic differences, beginning with the world of abstract forms, come into being through the Lord's power of Glamour, *Maya;* the five vestures come into being through the separate self.

"When these vestures which enwrap the Lord and the separate self, are cast aside, there remains neither Lord nor separate self. The king has his kingdom, the vassal his village; when these are taken away, there is neither vassal nor king" (244, *seq.*).

The One Self which is the centre of Shankara's system is not a mathematical formula. It is pure consciousness, pure intelligence, pure experience. It is described in abstract and impersonal terms only because it cannot be identified with any form or body, and because its sole object of contemplation is said to be itself. Cosmic Mind, *Ishvara*, and the individual mind or ego, *Ahamkara*,

are polarized centres within the One Self. Polarization or duality must be known as the product of ignorance or "not-knowing", *Avidya*, before the soul can know the bliss of unlimited consciousness, *Ananda*, the "positive characteristic of the esoteric Brahman which presupposes the negation of all differences". When such an experience is known, it is so intense that no image, no symbol, no idea can express it. The images of thought, like the images perceived by the senses, may figure the transcendent reality; but they become irrelevant when that reality is seen in its proper nature.

"The Scripture explains that the undifferentiated Brahman is pure intelligence and free from all that is different from it, for it says: 'As a block of salt has no inside or outside; but through and through consists only of salt taste, so also this Atman has no inside or outside but consists throughout altogether of intelligence'" (*Commentary on the Brahma Sutras*, 3, 2).

We assumed a great deal when we suggested the possibility that an acquaintance with ideas such as these, might have helped Descartes to comprehend what is really involved in the great antinomy of the soul and God which he discovered. Descartes' mind was hard and positivistic, nor would it have been easy to implant an idea foreign to it. After all, God implanted the idea of himself there, as Descartes testifies, and yet his other ideas were not greatly affected thereby. He had, indeed, that type of intelligence with which we have become painfully familiar in the modern world, the type which is known as scientific. It has its magnificent qualities,—perseverance, concentration, respect for facts of a certain order; the inventions which have metamorphosed the surface of the earth are its handiwork. But also it is capable only of receiving ideas of external things, its comprehension of consciousness is nil;—like the moon, on one side it is radiant with physical light, but on the other side all is dark and cold.

Nevertheless, Descartes was something more than his mind, for he proved it even to himself, and no cut-and-dried rationalist would ever have undertaken the experiment which he attempted or, in any case, would have gone so far into the true "land of mystery". We like to think of him as a potential mystic who might have "broken through" under more favourable auspices. Perhaps, he will "break through" next time, if he has not already done so. But we feel certain that such an event will not occur until some of the wisdom of the East is mingled in his nature with the Western love of concreteness in form and action. Moreover, this reflection is equally applicable to others besides Descartes.

STANLEY V. LADOW.

# ONE PURPOSE OF THE THEOSOPHICAL SOCIETY

THE Theosophical Society has often been described as "a missionary organization for the conversion of people to their own ideals". No greater service can be rendered a man than to reveal to him the true ideal of his own heart and soul. Once seen, if it be in truth the ideal of his heart, he cannot but love it, and loving it, will seek to follow and attain it. The war showed that the world is capable of responding to an ideal that it can see. Belgium's King answered the call of honour—delaying thereby the German armies for a few urgently needed days—and the nation followed him. In England, after Zeppelins and atrocities in Belgium had made clear the character of the enemy, four million men volunteered before conscription became necessary. Thousands of men who in peace had led dull, commonplace lives, attained to heights of heroism and endurance. The war over, they seem to have sunk back to the level from which they rose, as if they saw nothing worthy of their further effort.

What the world needs is an ideal, a vision of something that men can love; that will call forth all that is best in them,—something that will lift them from interest in the material to the things of the spirit, from their false to their true selves. Devotion to a cause, as in the war, to a leader or to their religion, has done this in the past. The trouble to-day is that men see no cause worthy of their whole-hearted devotion; personal loyalty to a leader is out of fashion, and men do not understand their religion. Time was when whole nations responded to the call for the Crusades with the answering cry: "Crosses, crosses, give us crosses." They knew that their Master had died for them, and leapt forward at the chance to serve Him in return, to give their lives for him as he had given his life for them.

Men are less simple to-day. They have ceased to believe in a jealous God who insisted on a victim, however innocent, to appease his wrath at the sins of men. To the ordinary man, the story of the incarnation is unjust or meaningless. As presented to him, it insults his conception of Deity. For the most part, he has ceased to believe in hell, and hence sacrifice to attain salvation, for himself or for others, seems unnecessary to him. As a result, the passionate gratitude and devotion of the times of the Crusades are seldom found. Modern feeling rarely goes beyond admiration for nobility of character. As usually pictured, the so-called Christian ideal is an ideal of meekness, of patient endurance, of indiscriminate and premature forgiveness; but it contains no element of the powers of accomplishment. Men know, instinctively and rightly, that the world needs men of action. They give lip-service to Christianity, but their real worship goes to accomplishment.

The ideal that does not include effective power is no ideal of theirs. The Master Christ is represented to them as being led unresistingly to torture and death by the forces of evil. They admire his self-sacrifice and courage, but have no slightest trace of desire to grow like him themselves. It is not the ideal of their hearts, and hence has little power to draw them.

Students of Theosophy know that that picture is a terrible travesty. Christ was not led unresisting and submissive where the powers of evil chose to take him. His whole life was war against those powers, his passion a single-handed combat to the death,—a combat which he won before he died. Probably no one but a Master can understand all that is involved in the incarnation of an Avatar and its portrayal of the life-cycle of the soul, but even a little knowledge of theosophical principles brings greatly increased light and understanding, making it evident that infinitely more lies beyond, hidden in golden mist. Let us see what light such theosophical principles as we do know, will throw on the battle fought and won by the great Western Avatar, nearly two thousand years ago.

We know that there is a White Lodge and that there is a Black Lodge, and that they are at war. The battle-grounds are the hearts and minds of men, to which both sides have access. As has often been pointed out, all battles of every sort, in outer as in inner warfare, are fought, and won or lost, within the hearts and wills of those who fight. He who refuses the longest to admit defeat, wins the fight always. It is also a fact that in inner as in physical things, action and re-action are equal and opposite. Hence, when an attack is repelled—or a temptation resisted—the attack recoils with equal force on the attacker. It follows that every temptation conquered, is a positive blow for good, weakening to that extent the evil of the world at its source.

We know further that spiritual power is given on the condition that it shall not be used for self. The penalty is the loss of the power. We can see, even on lower planes, how power perverted to self becomes blunted, weakened and finally lost. On higher planes, the results must follow much more rapidly and completely. The Masters have gained and hold all of their great powers in trust, in accordance with this law. Still another principle, and one that the modern world sorely needs to learn, is that Masters never compromise with unrepentant evil. They act on their principles and leave results to the Law.

Tradition says that the members of the Great Lodge were not unanimous in approving the incarnation of the Western Master at the time chosen, on the ground that the risk of defeat and resulting loss was too serious, the evil in the world too powerful. We think of the Master Christ's victory as a foregone conclusion, but it was far from being so. His danger was very real, and the outcome was not determined until that final cry of triumph: "It is finished." When he incarnated in a physical body, he entered the lists, like a knight in the days of chivalry—he was himself the source and embodiment of chivalry—throwing down his gauntlet to the hosts of evil. To take such a body was in itself to enter the lists, for the body is the battleground, to which all the forces of evil have access, and against which, in his case, they

were later to hurl their full power. This attack, we may be sure, was not merely to inflict meaningless suffering. Its aim, in part at least, must have been to force a great Master to violate spiritual law. If the Black Lodge could succeed in any particular, the victory to that extent was theirs.

The conditions of the battle and the weapons available to the Black Lodge would be determined in large measure by the evil of the world; the degree to which men could be dominated through their vices, on the one hand, and, on the other, the extent to which they would respond to the Master's call. Another great Avatar, Buddha, was not crucified outwardly—though outer crucifixion, terrible as it is, must be only a small part of the crucifixion of the soul involved in the physical incarnation of a great Master, and in the subsequent waiting for the return from men of the love and life which he, as Avatar, pours out upon the world. ("The ingratitude of men is more painful to me than all the sufferings of my Passion.")

The great task of a soul on incarnating is to come to consciousness of itself, of its purpose and its immortality; "to know itself to be," in the words of *Light on the Path.* To do this, it must pierce the darkness made by the sin and materialism of the world, must "break down the middle wall of partition," as St. Paul says, between its temporary dwelling in the body and its true home in the spiritual world. The greater the wickedness of the world at any given time, the denser and blacker its atmosphere and hence the greater the difficulty of the soul in coming to self-consciousness. At times this difficulty must be so great that only a very high soul has any chance of success. Krishna, speaking as the Oversoul, says in the Bhagavad Gîta, "When there is a withering of the Law and an uprising of lawlessness on all sides, I manifest Myself for the salvation of the righteous." At such times some great soul incarnates and reestablishes the connection with the spiritual world. The way once broken and the light let through, it becomes more possible for others to follow. Men can grope their way toward a glimmer of light in the darkest night, when, without it, they might be hopelessly lost.

At the time of the incarnation in Palestine, the materialism of the world seems to have been at its deepest, and the power of the Black Lodge at its height. It may be that, had this condition continued, millions of men would have sunk so low that their redemption would have become impossible. Sometimes it is necessary to check an advancing enemy at almost any cost. Once during the Indian mutiny, a force of Sepoy cavalry surprised an English battery and charged down a narrow road to capture it. To gain the few precious minutes needed to enable the guns to be brought into action, the officer commanding the battery leaped on his horse and dashed alone against the head of the charging column. The force of his impact overthrew the first few men, blocking for a moment the narrow road and throwing the head of the column into confusion. Then he was himself ridden down. But he had gained the time needed to load the guns, and the battery was not taken. That act, in its dash and utter self-immolation, suggests on its small scale, the "cavalry charge" aspect of the Master Christ's incarnation.

Or we may picture him as in the scene in *Letters to Friends* (p. 185), where the "youngest of the gods," he who was "of all most faithful," stands on the battlements of heaven, pitying the misery on earth, and asking himself if there be no way to help.

"'There is a way,' he said.

"Like light, bursting from the dark rim of a cloud, or like a shooting star, the youngest of the gods plunged from heaven into the depths of space.

"Far, far below, drawn from the utmost Nadir, there rose a cloud of darkness to meet that straight diving ray of light. As it rose it took shape, till Queen Nephthys saw spread out before her the mighty hosts of evil, ranged rank upon rank of chariots and horsemen, spearmen and bowmen, fire-breathing dragons and demons of the pit. Rank upon rank, they rose from the distant pole; yet it seemed that they rose not of their own will, but drawn forth by the swift coming of the youngest of the gods.

"Midway they met. And now, as when the sun has freed itself from clouds, its rays spread forth covering all the land, so from the youngest of the gods went forth his light, engaging all that mighty host of evil in such combat as the worlds had never seen before. Like rain upon the earth fell the life-blood of the god; like brimstone from the pit fell the bodies of his foes; till naught of all that marshalled host remained, nor light nor darkness reigned."

Christ's life on earth was a battle throughout. In that battle, one of the main objectives of his foes of the Black Lodge must have been to force him to violate his own code of honour,—one with spiritual law itself. We are not told the extent to which he knew in advance the details of what was to occur, or the exact time a given event would happen. Such prevision of the future is hidden from the eyes of men, and he took many of man's limitations upon him. Surely he must often, and at critical times, have had to press forward in the dark, as we have to do. Guidance is given to us in the form of duties. "Duty" is only another name for the plan of God for us. When we are wanted to do something, either for our own growth, or for others, or for the warfare of the Lodge in the world, outer circumstances are so arranged as to make what is wanted our every-day duty. No voice speaks from the sky. We are not told the inner reason why we are to do a given thing, or what the outcome will be. All that we may know is that something has become our simple duty. Our path to the true objective of our souls in coming to incarnation lies always through our duties; never apart from them. Did the Master Christ know in his humanity just what was to happen to him and when? Or did he know only that it was his duty to do certain definite things, and that, if he did them, the temper of the Jews was such as to make his torture and death certain?

Take, for example, the final phase of the battle, the last desperate struggle of the Black Lodge to redeem the day. Let us remember that the Master's victory was by no means sure. Was, or was not, his will as a man, in his humanity, stronger than all the force the powers of evil could bring against him? They used all their weapons in that final stage to force him to abandon

his purpose or to violate the law of his spirit,—the extreme of pain and torture brought to bear on an exhausted body, ignominy, shame, ridicule from those he despised, pain to those he loved, ingratitude and desertion from those for whom he was laying down his life. It is this tremendous, single-handed conflict, with its heaping of suffering on suffering, which seems so meaningless to many men; yet perhaps we may get glimpses of some small part of what it means. We know that an Avatar pours out his life and love and compassion upon men until the very rocks and trees respond, and the whole earth is made new. If by blackest ingratitude or severest torture from those he came to help, his love and compassion could be weakened or made to falter; or if, by subjecting him to the extreme of agony, the representative of the White Lodge could be forced to break whatever it may be that, with a Master, corresponds to the rule that those trusted with spiritual power must never use it for themselves, the victory then might be with the powers of evil, and the White Lodge be weakened by the loss of one of the greatest of its warriors.

There was no time during the scourging or the crucifixion when the Master could not have stopped the pain and ended the battle by asking his Father for "more than twelve legions of angels," or by simply willing it so. "Yet for this cause came I unto this hour." Every moment of pain endured, of compassion poured out in spite of the wickedness of men, was a new victory; and he fought to the end. The scourging is passed over quickly in the Gospels, yet it is the most terrible of all punishments. Every blow of the scourge was a fierce effort by his bitter enemies to make him yield. The taunt, "If thou be the Christ, free thyself and come down from the cross," was perhaps no idle jibe, but may well have been the expression of what the Black Lodge was desperately trying to accomplish. He could have come down, and he would not. His unconquerable love and compassion for men, and his perfect obedience to spiritual law, turned every weapon, every attack, back on the forces of evil, their onslaughts recoiling on themselves with overwhelming force.

Some day, when the world is ready and can understand, the story of the Passion will be told as it occurred—and as it is to-day. Then the heart of the world will catch fire at the foot of the Cross, and passionate devotion to the great Western Master will flame forth once more. Those on his ray, who belong to him, will see him for what he is, the greatest of warriors, and will recognize in him the ideal of their own hearts, with nothing lost of what they truly see to-day, and all they long for added,—the fountain head of heroism, of chivalry, of wisdom, effectiveness and power, as well as of love and tenderness and compassion. In the Great War men showed that they could still give all for an ideal, dimly seen, blurred and obscured though it was. What might they not do if they could realize that the deepest, truest ideal of their hearts is embodied in their Master, and that he lives, and calls them to his warfare.

To understand, requires preparation, and knowledge of spiritual law. To lay the ground-work of this preparation, and to conserve knowledge of spiritual law in the world, is one of the tasks of The Theosophical Society.

J. F. B. M.

# WAR MEMORIES

## XVIII

### Post-Armistice Days

THE signing of the armistice changed practically every outer circumstance of life, and after the long years of wartime conditions, the readjustments seemed even more drastic than when we had been shot from the pre-war state of peace, into the turmoil of July-August-September, 1914. Until the armistice I had always believed it far too easy to resume old habits, no matter of what nature they might be; they simply resumed themselves, sometimes most inconveniently but always more or less automatically, I thought. *Now*, I found it dreadfully uphill work to face the idea of doing the old, old things in the same old, dull, respectable way—regular hours for everything, instead of doing unexpected everythings at almost any hour, day or night: dinner uneventfully at half-past seven, with a maid in spotless cap and apron, instead of snatching a meal when you could, served by an improvised orderly in horizon-blue or in khaki; being prosaically sure that you would have a substantial roof over your head, instead of enjoying the more spontaneous and satisfactory feeling that you were glad to have any roof at all; to be obliged to waste good time planning your new wardrobe, when it had been so simple, all these years, merely to order a new uniform when you needed it—what an awful fuss and bore these outworn "manners and customs" seemed now! Yet Paris, with that serene, silent and most ancient witchcraft of hers, passed gracefully over the breach, without hesitation and without delay transforming herself almost overnight. How she did it, Paris herself only knew, but before you had time so much as to notice it, she had begun to shed her wartime look; the streets were brilliantly lit again for the first time in more than four danger-darkened years, the dismal blue lining of the lamp globes was removed as if by magic, the great arc-lights blazed out again, making Paris more fairylike than ever; the shop windows were illuminated to their utmost; the mountains of sandbags which covered the façades of the public buildings and monuments, and even from end to end of the Rue de Rivoli, began to melt away as snow does under a summer sun; the narrow strips of paper pasted with the usual care and precision, and with the characteristic French eye for the beautiful, in intricate, geometrical designs over many of the large, plate-glass windows, to protect them against shattering by bomb explosions, vanished from sight, while to our unbounded pleasure, the great fountains in the Place de la Concorde began to play again, and, after their long sleep, were throwing their splendid, silvery jets high into the cool air, splashing joyfully into the wide, round basins below. Perhaps most unbelievable of all, however, we realized that we no longer had to keep our blinds down at night—no fear of air raids now! As a matter of fact, it

took me more than two years to get over the habit of thought, as night came on: "I must close the shutters before I turn on my electric lights", so indelible had been the impress of the Defence of the Realm Acts—as ineffaceable as a Government Seal. So I found that the old peace-time habits had been far easier to cast off than were the habits of War.

The armistice revelry in Paris continued, of course, for several days; the German guns—those that were not too heavy to be moved by hand—continued to be dragged about town (there were rumours that Clemenceau had given full consent to this), and the streets continued to be thronged. Then, on Sunday, November the seventeenth, came Alsace-Lorraine Day, with High Mass at Notre Dame, which all Paris attended; a great parade down the Champs Elysées and the joyous news of the official repatriation of the "lost provinces", known of old, and again now spoken of as "The Nursery of French Generals"—the homeland of at least two of Napoleon's Marshals and two of his Generals: Ney, Kellermann, Rapp, Kléber—news of the triumphal entry into the beloved fortified towns there, which, for forty-eight years, had been in alien hands. Yet, despite the splendid and stirring accounts of the ceremonies which took place in that peculiarly French city, Metz (the very keys of which had never been surrendered to the Germans, because when they so shamelessly stole it in 1871, those keys—symbol of true ownership—had been rescued by one whose heart was ablaze with patriotism, and ever since had been preserved in French hands)—even so, you could not help regretting that well-planned drive, frustrated by the armistice: the drive for which Foch had made all the detailed arrangements, including a quick advance along both sides of the Moselle, and a sharp attack which would certainly have taken the old, grey city as a military achievement, instead of as the result of an ill-judged cessation of hostilities. You felt that even if we had had to wait another fortnight or so, to be assured that French flags were once more streaming from the topmost pinnacle of the cathedral, flying triumphantly from the ring of forts crowning the encircling hills—as we were told they now did—nevertheless we should have been better satisfied to know that it was because the Germans had been driven out *à coups de baïonnette* instead of being allowed to withdraw in safety. However, we read with misty eyes of the deeply moving and unaffected rejoicings of the people, as they watched the French troops come marching in, and when, a few days later, the entry into Strasbourg was made, we in Paris had our share in it because that night the great statue, in the Place de la Concorde, of the long-ago lost and now happily-recovered town, stripped of its mourning *crêpe* and its funerary wreaths, was dramatically draped in a vast French flag which swept to the very earth, while the most brilliant Bengal-fire lights, blazing from the gaping mouths of huge enemy trench-mortars drawn in a wide circle around it, illuminating it from below, transformed it into such dazzling whiteness that you could hardly look at it. People who were present at that entry into Strasbourg, said that the scenes which took place there were unforgettable; the inhabitants were like people long imprisoned in dungeons finding themselves in the sunlight again; women and children of all ages and classes, dressed

in the national costumes and with the *cocarde* fastened to their huge Alsatian bows, dancing through the old and narrow streets, often actually impeded the regular marching of the troops; all of them marched *with* the troops, singing, throwing flowers, waving old, torn banners—banners which had belonged to the happy days before the Franco-Prussian War. We were told that one of the very first things which the French did when they entered Strasbourg, was to set the famous great clock at French time again, to set it once more beating in unison with every other clock in France.

The return of Alsace-Lorraine to the mother-country was everywhere accompanied, over the length and breadth of the land, with the same profound thanksgiving, the same undisguised, unaffected transports of joy, and we heard the most touching accounts of old people who had been young when the terrible blow of separation fell,—old people who, all those long years, had kept French flags concealed at home (it was a "crime", followed by the severest punishment to possess them), and who now brought them out to wave again in the light of day; of others who, not having been able to preserve the old, made new ones out of Second Empire material, the existence of which even the Germans had not suspected. Everywhere, as the French troops advanced toward the Rhine—in Metz and Strasbourg, in Colmar and Mulhouse, in Château-Salins and Sarrebourg, in Saverne with its bitter memories of an injustice which became famous the world over, in Morhange where the French defeat of 1914 was more than revenged—in every town the French troops were treated with rapturous outbursts, all in the mother-tongue, by the heart-hungry inhabitants who, for nearly fifty years, had kept the French language alive in their homes and families, despite every effort of the Germans to prevent it. The old, hated German spelling given to the dearly-loved and lost French towns, was altered without delay; the German signs in the streets disappeared at a stroke; the old German names for public buildings and hotels changed overnight. In the smallest wayside villages, in the remotest twilight-haunted valleys, the unfaltering loyalty to France was made so touchingly, so searchingly evident that it was said many of the common soldiers, marching with the advancing French Armies toward the old German frontier, marched with the tears streaming down their bronzed and furrowed cheeks, so deeply moving was the reception given them. All this is very ancient history now, but it was indescribably stirring to us at that time.

Of course, the armistice was soon followed by a series of royal and diplomatic visits of congratulation—King George, and then King Albert with Queen Elizabeth, were among the first. But even these ceremonies were relatively simple and quiet affairs, for Paris was waiting for just one thing—for the great day when the Armies of France should come marching home, and nothing else in the way of a celebration really mattered; Paris was not going to dim the glory of her dear *poilus*, or their triumphant entry, even for so great and revered a War-hero as King Albert—and he would have been the first to wish it so. Besides which, even at this early period, there was already a growing, anxiety-breeding realization, rapidly spreading even among those who had appeared

to be the most optimistic about the armistice, that "defeated Germany" was not going to live up to her promises. Just how or where this feeling first began, in a wider sense, I cannot now remember, even if I ever knew, but men on leave from the Rhine districts brought back stories about things they had seen and heard there—stories which were not calculated to allay our uneasiness. It was quite evident that, as Germany had never suffered the horrors of invasion, as no part of her territory had ever been destroyed or whole populations (old men, women and young children) deported and pressed into slavery and abject misery through the years, as life there had never been disorganized (towns razed so that you could not even distinguish them from the land which surrounded them, and fertile fields laid bare)—it was quite evident that in a far shorter time than France was now facing, Germany would be on her feet again; it was also evident that she herself already knew this. Therefore, with the most heartbreaking tales daily reaching us from the devastated regions of France—regions where there was hardly a house left standing, where as yet there was practically no food or any immediate hope of food; where the fields which might have been cultivated had been systematically, scientifically made barren for years to come—it is not surprising that at first incredulity, and then the utmost indignation was felt in France when we heard it said (even within a few days after the armistice was signed) that in America, where the food relief campaign was vigorously being pushed, there was serious discussion and apparent intention "to feed the starving Germans" who, moreover, were demanding it as though by right! For four long and bitter years the Germans had been methodically and with malign purpose, starving millions—women and children as well as men; now they were eloquently pleading hunger on their own account; they were demanding that food be sent them without delay. I believe that, apart from the burning indignation which was felt when the pitiful condition of the returned French prisoners became generally known, there was nothing, at least in the later part of the War, which roused public feeling to such a pitch as did this amazing idea from overseas (the plan to feed the Germans was referred to there as proof of "impartiality"!), and many of us who were Americans living in France, particularly those of us who were daily learning more about the fearful destitution which existed in the devastated regions, were outspoken in our protests against the injustice of feeding the murderers while the victims were still dying of hunger. France did not feel "impartial"—why *should* she? How *could* she? Did America imagine that France could feel and act as though nothing had happened? The Germans had not yet even acknowledged their guilt, and we felt they could quite well feed themselves out of their superfluity of land—land which had never been laid waste. Perhaps for many people it is difficult to realize to-day, when so much has been forgotten, how strong and deep and unrelenting was our condemnation of the organized atrocities in Belgium and in France; of the shameless deportations of noncombatants, especially of the women and young girls; of the unheard of cruelties to the Allied prisoners of war. But perhaps it is even more difficult to realize to-day, how, with some of us who were there, and who saw with our own eyes what was

taking place, this condemnation, this burning indignation still remains, and must remain, unquenchable.

News of the most distressing kind came in from the devastated regions—stories of unbelievable misery and need. Those civilians who, despite everything, had remained in or near their old, now ruined homes, were facing conditions which mortal man could not live through unless immediate help reached them. Those who were slowly returning, after evacuation, found the conditions almost as dangerous as before they had left, for, of course, not only were the fields strewn with still unexploded bombs (which, however, did explode if inadvertently jarred), but the retreating Germans, true to their fiendish methods, had left time-fuse bombs in countless semi-demolished houses all over the country from which they had been driven out, so that a returning family, thankful to find even a few tottering walls of what had once been their home, would be blown out of existence the moment they crossed their shattered threshold. Even small children, who had escaped the savagery of earlier days, now fell innocent victims to this later, perhaps more refined and diabolical atrocity, being killed without a moment's warning, as they played in the ruins of their former homes. So it was dreadfully dangerous to return at all, both because of live shells in the fields, or those hidden in broken chairs or under innocent enough looking tables in the smashed-in houses; and also because even if these poor, foot-weary wanderers did return, where was their food coming from—and with winter setting in, too?

France, of course, was quick to recognize the immense, far-reaching need, and, almost before the ink of the signatures to the armistice was dry, relief on an even larger scale than that which had been organized and working from the beginning (for civilian relief organizations had steadily advanced as the enemy retreated), was mapped out and set rolling. Close in the contaminated wake of the retreating Germans, followed the various French Relief Committees, and although it was poignantly realized that years and years of work, and milliards in money, could not restore the North to what it had been before the War, everyone set heartily to work to do whatever he or she could do. It was at this moment—about two weeks after the armistice—that *my* Committee asked me to go up to the *Département du Nord* on a quick tour of inspection; to come back and report and, if it appeared feasible, to return there and open a supply depot in that devastated region, by means of which the Committee would undertake to furnish warm clothing, shoes, blankets and other necessities to a given number of villages. The general area I was to investigate was that part of the country which lay between Douai and Valenciennes; I was to get details of the varying needs of towns and villages in the locality, and as, on my return from this first trip, we knew the French authorities would officially assign us a definite number of communes, we should thus lose no time in getting started. I had little difficulty in obtaining my various passes, for not only was my Committee well known, but the French were, of course, eager to push all relief work, and they offered those engaged in it every possible facility and assistance. So, toward the end of November, I started on what proved to be one of the most harrowing

yet, at the same time, one of the most deeply interesting journeys which I have ever made. The camionnette furnished me by my Committee was, I believe, a Ford—though everything, to my uninitiated eye, appeared to be a Ford in those days—and the driver was a young French girl in the Motor Service Section, who proved to be as eager for the trip as I was. She was very good natured about the load we had to carry, for it was not only heavy, but cumbersome as well. It needed good packing to get in all that we had been told we should find necessary: our petrol for the entire trip; a formidable array of tires, for we had been informed of the condition of the roads we should have to pass over; all our food—for even if, as relief workers, we might be offered a meal here and there, we naturally had no wish to take a single mouthful from those who were in far more need than we could possibly be. In addition to this we took all we could squeeze in of clothing for the most destitute, especially for the children—blankets and condensed milk. For although this was really but a tour of inspection, we knew that we were going where, as yet, little relief had penetrated. When we had completed our packing and were at last ready to start, we looked rather apprehensively at the springs of our poor old Ford—they were as near flat as they could well be! Nothing daunted, however, we determined to start, taking whatever chanced, and we left Paris shortly after noon one bright, late November day.

We had, of course, made many inquiries as to our best route, wishing to make good time if we could, and feeling somewhat as though we were on an exploring expedition into an unknown country, so uncertain was the going on almost all of the roads toward the North; but we could learn little save that we had better head straight for Beauvais, and from there go on to Amiens, where we could probably stop the first night; after that we must shift for ourselves as well as we could; no one in Paris (no one that we came upon, at least) had any idea what lay beyond that point.

As far as I can now remember, this first part of our journey was comparatively uneventful, for, in order to avoid difficulties, we kept as far to the west as we could, thus skirting the high-water mark of the German advance, even that of 1914. As we passed through Beauvais I was greatly relieved to see that the beautiful cathedral was apparently unharmed, but as we continued our way toward Amiens, the wide-rolling country became increasingly seamed by long, waving, white lines—trenches which stretched away as far into the distance as we could see; deep, cruel slashes on the face of the earth. We also came upon many blown-up bridges, and soon gave up counting them. It has been estimated that the *Chemin de Fer du Nord* alone lost well over fifteen hundred, and as for the bridges which spanned any river we came to—all seemed to have been sacrificed. We reached Amiens long after dark, and finding, as we might have expected, that every available building which had been left intact had been "taken over by the military", my little French driver began to be worried as to what we were to do next, especially with the car. Being in the English sector, however, I felt quite at home, and more than equal to taking any liberties which might prove to be necessary. The streets were thronged

with the familiar British khaki, and everywhere you heard English spoken (not a little of it unmistakably hailing from that indefinable, but by no means mythical region which lies within the sound of Bow Bells); so, way-laying a friendly N.C.O. who chanced to pass just at the right moment for us, I appealed to him for help. With my usual good luck I had fallen upon a Secret Service man who knew all the ins and outs of Amiens at that time. It was a lucky thing for us that we found him, for he assured us that he knew of only one house in the whole town where he felt we could be even half comfortable or reasonably quiet and undisturbed, and that house was practically windowless (all the glass having been shattered), and was riddled with shrapnel holes. However, he took us under his protection, and left not a stone unturned until he had got us safely lodged, fed and our car put up for the night. He was up at dawn the next morning to see us on our way, telling us to take the Albert-Bapaume-Cambrai road which would be the least impassable, as well as the least destructive to our small car. We wanted, before nightfall, to reach a tiny village somewhat to the north of Cambrai, where a Paris friend had offered us the use of what remained of her château (her two old caretakers and the curé being in charge); there we could make a kind of temporary headquarters with at least a roof over our heads, and could obtain what was of far more importance—good, *local* advice which would be invaluable to me in starting a centre for work.

That second day's journey was one long, black horror, yet, back of the horror, perpetually shone the glory. Shortly after leaving Amiens we entered an indescribably awful desolation—we were crossing the old battle-fields of the Somme—a desolation which, once seen, was to haunt me for ever after.

It was in the summer and autumn of 1916 that the great Allied offensive, the First Somme, was fought—fought, as far as Great Britain was concerned, chiefly by Kitchener's "New Army", the result of that superb and instant response of five million British Empire volunteers to the call of their great chief. Most of the "Old Contemptibles" had already fallen at Mons and on the Aisne, at First and Second Ypres, at Neuve Chapelle and Festubert in the following months, and it was here, in the lovely, smiling, agricultural country which stretched from Amiens to Bapaume that, between July and November, a vast portion of the younger generation of Great Britain and her colonies was wiped out—those hills and valleys of Picardy were to prove the last resting place of the most gallant, the most single-hearted among her younger sons. The real object of the Somme offensive was to relieve the terrific pressure at Verdun, but for two years the Germans had been uninterruptedly busy here, strengthening their defences, so that the obstacles which would have to be overcome before any breach in the enemy lines could be made were well recognized as almost insuperable. Perhaps it would be safe to say that, since the end of open warfare in the autumn of 1914, scarcely any offensive on the western front had been more hazardous or more momentous than this one. It was here, too, more than at any previous time, that the terrible truth was at last realized—the truth of what Kitchener had, for so many futile years, been openly and ceaselessly declaring: the wicked folly of unpreparedness. I have always found it

an arresting circumstance that it was less than a month after Kitchener's own tragic death, that the men of his splendid New Army faced (and how they faced it!) their first great baptism of fire; that through all the blood and agony of that long, disheartening struggle, those men who, but two years before, had known absolutely nothing of military training or of what the life of a soldier involved, demonstrated the stern metal of which they were made, fully lived up to the high traditions with which Kitchener himself had inspired them. The First Somme has always seemed to me one of the highest tributes which could have been paid him, for, while the military results may have fallen short of what was hoped, the superb, unflinching valour of those troops, in the midst of that unprecedented carnage, and under conditions which, up to that time, had never even existed, would be difficult to surpass.

The *Grande Route Nationale* which we were now following, and which runs eastward out of Amiens, leads at first through somewhat level country, and then, toward Albert, enters a region of low-rolling hills, the ground rising gradually until it reaches "the ridge"—that famous ridge!—a little beyond Pozières, where it descends again gently toward Bapaume. It was on either side of this great highway, for some miles to the north and south (to the south where, at Maricourt, the British lines joined those of the French), that the severest of the fighting of that summer and autumn took place; and it was straight through what remained of the country, not only after the first bitter and sanguinary struggle, but also after the second and third, that we were now passing. From the first advance of July, 1916, on a front of twenty miles, to the last phase at Beaumont-Hamel, the following November, that gigantic effort, that fighting against what proved to be overwhelming odds, resulted in little less than annihilation for a great part of the British forces; while as for the land itself, what had once been spoken of as a smiling "garden" became known, at the end of 1916, as "*La Picardie Mutilée*", and still later, when Second and Third Somme had been fought in 1917 and 1918, as "*Le Royaume de la Mort*".

The day was dark and gloomy, which intensified the awfulness of what we saw, and the farther north we got, the more the horror grew. Before we had reached Albert, practically all vegetation had disappeared; no grass, no shrubs, no trees; the face of the earth, as far as the eyes could reach, a vast desolation of mud, noisome, black mud everywhere, and in this mud, half floating, all that one could expect or dream of finding on an abandoned battle-field—all the ghastly relics, the memories of war: gun carriages shot to pieces, with shreds and tatters of uniforms still hanging to them, caught in the wreckage, and telling of the men on whom the lightning had flashed, and who, in a moment of time, had lost even the semblance of men; guns which had foundered in the morass, dragging living men down with them; floating carcasses of mules and horses; and out across the rotting waste, above which great, hideous flocks of carrion birds constantly hovered, as we sped on, mile after mile, were huddled groups of charred and blackened stumps of trees, lifting shell-splintered, ghostly arms in silent protest, where, in happier days, shady forests had once grown. It was in 1916 on the Somme, that tanks were first used, and everywhere we saw their

huge, dark shapes, floundering like great Tertiary monsters, in the slime of a primeval world; enormous shell-holes made by Cyclopean explosions, wide and deep like the craters of extinct volcanoes, stretched as far as our eyes could reach—it was as lonely and awful as the dead face of the moon. And over it all was the mournful greyness of the wintry day, the bite and sting of the wintry wind. Often too, as some hillock lifted itself painfully out of the surrounding quagmire of death and decay, were to be seen those little, solitary graves so familiar to us all by now, each with a wooden cross, and a name written crudely upon it, or perhaps the single, eloquent word, "Unknown", with sometimes a trench helmet or even a Highlander's glengarry laid at the foot of the cross. The mutilation of the surface of the earth, its actual transformation, by the levelling of hills due to the springing of gigantic mines, and by the obliteration of valleys, was beyond anything I had ever seen before, and helped me to understand why the toll of life in that offensive, had been what it was. Of the hundreds of little villages which had been scattered all over this fertile and prosperous land, only a few shapeless mounds remained to show that clustering houses, under their sheltering trees, had once been there; some, we knew, actually lay at the bottom of the measureless, black-water-filled craters into which also, during night attacks or advance under heavy fog, both men and horses (whole battalions at a time it has been said) fell and were drowned. It was a devastation terrible beyond words to describe. Once or twice I had the car stopped and, getting out, walked off a little distance alone: there was the stillness of death; I *missed* the sound of the guns! The only normal things we saw in that forlorn and dreadful waste—something which helped to keep the balance—were the groups of friendly Tommies, mostly R.E., at work on the road, or who splashed past us in their solid British lorries, and to all of whom I called a greeting, their faces lighting up with surprise and pleasure when they heard what must have seemed to them like a voice from home.

As we passed through Albert we looked in vain for one unbroken wall to relieve the monotony of the destruction which had been wrought there; we found not one. The great cathedral where, until the German advance of 1918, the famous Virgin and Child still hung so miraculously, was a wreck of a few crumbling arches and mountains of piled-up stone—aching, gaping spaces through which the cold November winds were moaning. A little way out of Albert, at a particularly dreary, ravaged spot, on a bare knoll which raised itself beside the road, we passed a lonely Calvary—it might have towered on the bleak heights of Golgotha itself, so utterly abandoned was it; and in the gloom of that November light, the face of the Crucified One held you in awe, so great was its appeal; a special atmosphere seemed to emanate from that sad and quiet spot. Later it was told me, by one who was there during those terrible months of crisis, that that Calvary was well known to all, and that it had upheld and fortified many a man who knew, as many a man did know beforehand, that his last hour was near. We came to La Boisselle, another heap of ruins, and from a rise of ground I looked back westward, to where, toward Amiens, the friendly

green of vegetation, and little, shapely houses which were still standing, could faintly be discerned, and it seemed to me as though I were looking out on another and a happier world, a world which I had left for ever behind me, having wandered into a strange, twilight region from which I could not hope to find an escape. What must that same view have meant to those men of 1916 (because many of them must have stood just there, on that very spot), as they turned for what they well knew was the last time, to take farewell of the old, dear and familiar life, before entering the death-filled trenches! Then, on again we went. A little farther along that melancholy road, we passed through what had been Pozières, and over the famous "ridge", so bitterly contested, and then slipped down the incline toward Bapaume, and out beyond the line of the old battle-fields, out of the worst of the wrack and ruin, out of that overwhelming desolation.

Future generations may (perhaps justly) remember the immortal stand on the Marne; the splendour of the struggle for Verdun and the epic battles in the deadly Ypres salient, long after the incalculable sacrifice of the First Somme has been forgotten; but our memory of the thousands upon thousands of the flower of Great Britain's New Army—Kitchener's Army—who fell there on the chalk uplands of Picardy, or those whose young bodies were hopelessly crippled and broken there, can *never* really fade. Somewhere that magnificent if unsuccessful effort must be for ever graven in the annals of the ages. The First Somme has been called "the supreme tragedy", but to many of us it will for ever remain a supreme glory, and those dear British lads, and those lads from the far-off colonies who, in that fearful summer of 1916, there met death so gallantly, helped in a way which, perhaps, they may never even have guessed, to bring about the final victory of Verdun itself—so inextricably interwoven are our destinies in war!

In Bapaume we discovered that we had another bad puncture as well as engine trouble (no wonder, considering the roads we had just been over!), and my little French *chauffeuse*, without a moment's hesitation, heroically disappeared under the car—at least, most of her did—while I looked about for help, waylaying a youthful and amiable one-star subaltern, who chanced, to his misfortune, to be passing our way. With the usual wartime effrontery, I immediately commandeered his attention. He was charmingly amenable, and took us to the nearest repair station, where the car was soon patched up according to the most approved British Army methods, and we were on the road again. This road, from Bapaume to Cambrai, was of great interest to me, for it was here, in November, 1917, that the British, mostly infantry with the aid of many enormous tanks, had plunged forward in their terrific drive which came so near to breaking through the Hindenburg Line. Had the Battle of Cambrai been wholly successful, it would have put an end to trench warfare, then and there. Yet, even failing in this, the battle was of importance, as it held out a distinct hope which was, in fact, fulfilled the following spring; it presaged the open warfare of 1918. The country beyond Bapaume had a far less exterminated look than that which we had just been passing through; the miles of mud and

slime were being replaced by increasing stretches of grass,—the poor earth began to take on a more familiar look.

It was night (and pitch black night too) when we reached Cambrai, only to discover that we had still another puncture; but, emboldened by my past successes, this time I appealed to the Town Major himself (I was coming up in the world!), who soon got us into shape again, and, with his metaphorical blessing, started us off once more, explaining, as well as anyone could explain to anyone else—a greenhorn at that—the confusion of the roads, once we had left the beaten track; telling us the best course to follow if we wanted, that same night, to reach the small village toward which we were headed, and where we knew we were impatiently awaited.

This last lap of our journey was, in a way, the worst we had had as far as actual roads went, for, on leaving Cambrai, we also had to leave the main thoroughfare, and head, in the darkness, rather indefinitely north-east. Despite the fact that we were far behind our pre-arranged schedule time, we were obliged to crawl along, for, every few yards, shell-holes yawned ahead of us, and these back roads not being paved, the ruts made by the heavy motor lorries and other traffic were so deep that we lurched ominously from side to side. It was too dark for us to see anything to right or to left, and the churned-up road as we ploughed through the mud, looked dismal enough. To add to our general discomfort, perhaps to a general sense of uneasiness, enormous and loathsome rats kept scurrying across our path, lit up for the moment by our headlights, their elongated, black shadows magnifying their real size to dreadful proportions. It was quite late by this time, and these smaller roads were very confusing. We had long since ceased to meet the friendly Tommies who, throughout the day, had given us so much help, encouragement and cheer, and we were beginning to feel terribly lost and strange, two lone women out there in the night, when suddenly, at a sharp bend in the road, we almost bumped into an overturned lorry, lying ignominiously in a ditch by the roadside, while only a few yards away, in the adjoining field, were two of the familiar, khaki-clad figures, warming themselves beside a cosy-looking camp fire. They were a welcome sight indeed, to our bewildered eyes, and I called to them gladly. In an instant they were on their feet, naturally as astonished to hear themselves addressed in their native English and in a woman's voice, at that hour of the night, and in that remote and desolate region, as we ourselves had been to find them there—at a moment too, when we were beginning to be so much perplexed and in such great need of help. They came stumbling toward us, over the rough ground, their honest young faces peering eagerly at us through the darkness as they reached the side of our car; they had not seen an English-speaking woman for a long time, and could not believe their eyes or ears. Having ditched their lorry by mishap that morning, they were waiting for the help which had been promised them, to get it out on the road again, and we spent a happy few minutes discussing that never-failing topic of conversation, "Blighty", and their homes there, and what they had done before the War, and what they hoped to do once they were "demobbed", telling us as much about themselves

as they could crowd into those few minutes, in turn asking me boyishly and frankly all about myself—where I had come from and where I was going to, and why I was there at all. All the little conventional nothings which mar so much of ordinary life, had dropped away, as I believe is always the case in times like this—we were just like old friends, reunited. Then, at my request, they explained the false turning we had taken, putting us on the right track again, and reluctantly we drew off, leaving them standing there, side by side, until they were lost in the darkness. I have always remembered that little incident, though I do not exactly know why, for it was a common enough thing during the War; but it remains a vivid if fleeting picture to this day.

We finally reached our destination—the beautiful but semi-destroyed château lent us by our Paris friend—and though, of course, everyone had long since gone to bed (we were hours later than we had hoped we should be), we nevertheless received a warm welcome from the two old caretakers, and the aged curé who was living there, his own home having been destroyed. The following few days were busy ones, while I was making my investigations regarding the need for help in the surrounding cantons; but one case stands out from that grim and sombre background of misery—one case which alone would have been sufficient to fix me in my determination to come back again to the devastated North, as soon as my report was turned in at headquarters in Paris.

It was the evening after our arrival, and we had returned from a full day in the outlying districts where I had had my first glimpse of the heroic endurance, the silent suffering of these people who had lived through four long years of the German occupation—suffering which had left its mark on every face. It could not have been much more than nine o'clock, but the small household had already settled for the night. Everyone kept early hours in this part of the world, chiefly to save light and heat. Even my young French driver had fallen into a deep sleep, tired out with her exertions, for it was no easy task day after day to guide the car over the torn-up roads. As I sat there, reading by the light of a single, flickering candle which I had brought with me for the purpose, the absolute quiet within was only broken by the tempestuous winds without—winds which shrilled eerily around the broken corners of the old building, making a heavy shutter, partly loosened from its hinges by some well-aimed shot, bang suddenly to, and then bang again with a disturbing, slow, broken rhythm. The splendid great trees out in the park, groaned and swayed in the heavy gusts, and an ice-cold draught swept suddenly across the room, finding its way through a great shell-hole in the wall—a hole which was too wide and gaping to be securely closed.

Suddenly I was startled by a sharp, new sound—a loud, insistent knocking on some downstairs door. A pause, and again that loud knocking, even more pressing this time. Then I heard someone stirring in an adjoining room, and footsteps going quietly down the stairs; bolts pulled back and a heavy door opening somewhere below. I went out into the hall, my candle almost extinguished by the strong current of air which was rushing along the corridor, and I waited there to learn what the matter was. Up the stairs I heard feet slowly

climbing, and one of the old caretakers appeared with a troubled face, telling me that a man had come, and was asking for "the relief ladies"—he wanted their help for a neighbour's child who was dying. He had walked many miles across the sodden fields, having, in some way unknown to me, heard of our arrival (the rapidity with which the news of relief travelled at this time, showed only too well the desperate need), and he begged us to return with him to his village; he would not go away, he said, until the caretaker had promised to tell us that he was there, and the reason of his coming. I went back into the room I had just left, and roused my poor, exhausted driver, knowing well she would never forgive me if I did not call her. While she was getting into her warm things, I went downstairs to gather what information I could from the man who had come so far to find us, and then, collecting some of the clothing and blankets which we had brought in our car, condensed milk, a "Tommy cooker" and whatever else I could find, with the man as guide, we started. A few dark and dismal miles brought us to a ruined village where but a handful of wrecked houses was left—I could distinguish their poor, misshapen forms even in the blackness of that night—and we drew up at the broken door of one of them. As we entered, I heard a little weary, feeble cry, but I could see absolutely nothing in the darkness of that forlorn interior, so, shading the dim light of a small electric torch which I had brought with me, I looked about. A woman, dressed in some dull, threadbare material, was kneeling beside a disordered pile of straw, on which lay a delirious child, tossing feverishly under a rag of covering—part of a khaki overcoat, probably taken from some dead British soldier, or discarded on an old battle-field—her little, burning, restless hands plucking at the few discoloured buttons of the coat, in a kind of wild distress. The woman's attitude was one of absolute despair, and I have never forgotten it. She knew there was nothing she could do as she knelt there on the cold flagstones—nothing except watch the ebbing life of her child. She was evidently quite destitute; there was no heat in that shattered room, with its shell-splintered walls, where the icy winds drifted in; there was no light, save that of my own electric torch; there was not a crumb of food anywhere to be seen—there was only that heart-broken, lonely, ragged mother bending over her dying baby. When she heard us enter, she lifted tearless, unseeing eyes in which I instantly read that we had come too late as, indeed, in a very few minutes we knew for ourselves. It had been nothing less than a case of out-and-out starvation; exhaustion from lack of food, and then the inevitable consequences—something I was to meet with, over and over again.

The thought of that one woman was with me perpetually during the following days before I started back to Paris, for perhaps even more than the child, was she herself, in her abandoned sorrow, unforgettable; in her inarticulate anguish, her desolation, it was she, I think, more than anyone else I saw at that time, who made me feel that I must not and could not rest one unnecessary hour until I had returned again to the North, and to the work of which this stricken area was in such crying need.

VOLUNTEER.

*(To be concluded)*

# THE MYTHS OF PLATO

IT is risky to recommend books to people. The trouble is I have discovered Plato in my old age and am inclined to be rather noisy about it,—noisy, but *not* bold, not even venturing to lift the eyes to that scholarly minority among my friends who know all about Plato, but speaking only to those who, like myself, have been taught by wrong methods, or intimidated by big names, or bewildered by the dissensions of experts, and then left high and dry in a no man's land of thought. Queer beings that we are, we plume ourselves on queer things. It is quite usual to hear people boasting of no ear for sound, no eye for colour, no respect for the ocean, as though these drawbacks were distinctions, to be carried like *panaches;* so a lifelong ignorance of Plato is nothing to be set up about, even should egotism take that crazy twist. Speaking for myself, he was badly introduced in school days,—we were left blind to the charm and the beauty and the fun, we choked over the dialectics, dismissed Socrates as rather an old dear but lamentably plain, and only vaguely glimpsed that his display of jiu jitsu on young Greeks was quite a performance. Then we left school, "finished", and forgot all about it. Years later it was borne in upon me that many writers, indeed all philosophical religious writers, seemed to have to refer to Plato every so often, and I began to wonder what I had missed at sixteen. The hour had struck for Karma to give one of those educational shoves. The next step in a dunce's progress was the discovery that Plato was an initiate, and the next a determined search of *The Secret Doctrine*. That discovery was a blessed incentive, for with all deference to the awesome language they use, the stock philosophers are distinctly not initiates. Now a start was made, seeking I should find, and Karma had a book ready for me. With subtle wisdom, and for purposes of infuriation, it was the wrong book, the very book a well-meaning, pedagogical sort of teacher would veto as too upsetting for an ignoramus—a suave, adroit, witty, well-bred, misleading book, the clever shallows of a brilliant essayist who had rushed into a temple with his boots on, and greeted the unseen with a sneer. It did its appointed task of rousing antagonism and stubborn protest. Here were the facts—Plato was an Initiate—a member therefore of the White Lodge—a philosopher therefore to whom later philosophers, skating on one skate like small boys down the alley, could go to find the other—a thinker with whom the world agrees or quarrels, but who, deriving from the Ancient Wisdom, must be reckoned with by the student of that Wisdom.

My soul and my body! but these belated struggles toward an education are wearisome. The dialectical method, as of old, is still obnoxious to the lazy mind, and the droning boredom of dead afternoons comes echoing back.

Once more, I said, is there anything beautiful?
Yes.

To which the only opposite is the ugly?
There is no other.
And is there anything good?
There is.
To which the only opposite is evil?
There is no other.
Then every opposite has one opposite and no more?
He assented—and on, and on, and on.

And then the books about him and about. There was no time to go climbing all over Plato on step ladders. My kingdom for a book, and a book by a lover. It passes belief how these writers fuss and squabble. For example, in *The Platonic Tradition in English Religious Thought*, Dean Inge, in his fine, sane way, says that "Platonism is essentially a philosophy of values—the famous Ideas are values—not unrealized ideals, but facts understood in their ultimate significance". Now what is there to question about that? Positively nothing. But along comes Santayana, with page after page (so exquisitely written that they cannot be skipped, bad cess to him!) fussing about the precise meaning in this connection of the word "values", and gets a body all mixed up again. Ignorance, conscious of hunger, cannot be bothered with games of metaphysical spillikins or with the pros and cons of the academical-minded. My kingdom for a book—another book! Then destiny stood smiling—a friend, the servant of destiny, said, "What *you* want is a book called *The Myths of Plato*", and put it in my hand. It was the right book at last, a lover's book, and the exotericists ceased from troubling, for "beyond these voices there is peace".

A brief word is called for here as to just what purpose this book is meant to serve. It shall be spoken by Professor Stewart himself:—

> That Myth is an organic part of the Platonic Drama, not an added ornament, is a point about which the experienced reader of Plato can have no doubt. He feels, when the brisk debate is silenced for a while, and Socrates or another great interlocutor opens his mouth in Myth, that the movement of the Philosophic Drama is not arrested, but is being sustained, at a crisis, on another plane. The Myth bursts in upon the Dialogue with a revelation of something new and strange; the narrow, matter-of-fact, workaday experience, which the argumentative conversation puts in evidence, is suddenly flooded, as it were, and transfused by the inrush of a vast experience, as from another world—"Put off thy shoes from thy feet, for the place whereon thou standest is holy ground". . . . Each Myth is a unique work of art, and must be dealt with individually in its own context. . . . It is good that a man should be made to feel in his heart how small a part of him his head is. Herein chiefly lies the present value of Myth (or of its equivalent, Poetry, Music, or whatever else) for civilized man.

So the charm of these Myths is that of poetry; to arouse, as Dante, that other great maker of Myth, arouses it—"Transcendental Feeling", to regulate it and to satisfy it. Dr. Stewart argues that the Categories of the Understanding are

one thing, and the Transcendental Ideas are another; that in the mind of Plato they are mutually implicit, but that, in the Myths, he lifts us to a region where we are made to feel "the futility of rationalism, a region where Hope is confirmed by the 'vision splendid'."

This method of approach to the truths of life is distinctly obnoxious to certain types of mind; they complain that Socrates has become unhinged, they want his "demon" psycho-analyzed. A classical instance of this shortage of understanding is the charge brought against Plato by Kant, in the *Critique of Pure Reason:*

> The light dove, in free flight cleaving the air and feeling its resistance, might imagine that in airless space she would fare better. Even so Plato left the world of sense, because it sets so narrow limits to the understanding, and ventured beyond, on the wings of the Ideas, into the empty space of the pure understanding. He did not see that, with all his effort, he made no way.

It is waste of time to argue with those who hate mysticism, who look askance on "esoteric jargon", and smile at the idea of Initiates. To that large and useful class, with heads like four nails and both feet on the ground, we would say with all friendly goodwill, "stay there and don't irritate yourselves with Myths—Plato's or another's." These things are for the others, (and surely the littlest theosophist is numbered among them) who prefer wings and intend to use them, intermittently and feebly now—but wait!

It was my avowed intention, when beginning this article, not to smarten it up with little tags and ends of Greek scrip, not to enrich it with long words like eschatological and etiological and suchlike, and above all not to start talking about any particular Myth—for are not these all written in The Book? I did not know how hard it would be to refrain, for Greek is lovely and the Myths endearing. How much of the Ancient Wisdom dare we read into them? What is the prevailing obsession of the mind behind them—the thinker, poet, knower, and impassioned lover of the race? It seems to me to be the kamic struggle, the unending contest of the Desire of the World with the world's desire. In an effort to pierce the fog of human thought, the Myths unfold how it was in the beginning, how it is now, and how it ever shall be.

How often have we wailed, or heard each other wail, "In what way can we best get rid of Kama?" How often have we heard the patient answer, "Never try,—foster, train, transmute, it is your most precious possession." In the Symposium Myth, the Lady Diotima, treading with agile, cautious steps along the edge of mystery, speaks of the soul's ascent through the passing shows of Beauty up to the Eternal Beauty. " 'Tis then, dear Socrates, said the Woman of Mantinea, that life is worth living, and then only, when a man cometh to behold Beauty Itself. Then he hath become beloved of God and is himself immortal."

There are many ways in which to say it, and our Lady Diotima knows them all—"Love is the power that moves the world, the only power that moves the spiritual world."

L. S.

# MATERIAL WEALTH AND CELESTIAL ECONOMICS

*A horse is no wealth to us if we cannot ride, nor a picture if we cannot see, nor can a noble thing be wealth, except to a noble person.*—RUSKIN.

WHEN St. Paul wrote to his lay-chêla, Timothy, that "the love of money is the root of all evil", he probably meant just what he said; and, furthermore, knew what he was talking about—living, as he did, a Jew in a commercial age corrupted by wealth and plenty. Moreover, we have it on the high prophetic authority of Isaiah that mankind "shall be redeemed without money and without price"—a statement of Celestial Economics in obvious contrast with the way the world sets about *its* philanthropic saving of anybody—be he War Veteran or mere unemployed. The antithesis between love of money and complete independence of it, is a commonplace; and, generally speaking, the idea is still not unfamiliar in religious circles, however much disregarded. Redemption—the Kingdom of Heaven—cannot be bought with money, but with "the blood of the heart" alone,—"thy money perish with thee". Since, therefore, this era of special "enlightenment" in which we now live, has been heralded as one pre-eminently commercial and economic; since the "economic virtues" are extolled by teachers and publicists, endorsed by the clergy, and applied by statesmen to the solution of the world's political problems; and since the root-principle of all economic theory is the enhancement of material wealth and well-being,—the need for clear thinking, and vigorous, disciplined action on the part of students of Theosophy is obvious. How many individuals has one met, inside as well as outside The Theosophical Society, who have no wish for more money or a larger income? Our outlook as children of the age is bound to be coloured; our personal Karmic inheritance is almost certain to be tainted; our working ideals as well as our practice may well need, not merely to be bettered, but revolutionized. The old-fashioned theory of release from this universal problem of God versus Mammon—that of simply dying, after doing one's blundering best, and going with any luck to a moneyless heaven—is no longer open to most members of the Society, for they realize that ultimately the lessons of life cannot be side-stepped; every one of them has to be learned, and all problems solved by each in turn. Membership in the Lodge, not heaven (Devachan), is our destiny, for Devachan is but an interlude. Moreover, the next Lodge Messenger will have enough to do, without having to straighten *us* out about money matters.

Few people seem to appreciate the extent to which the traditional Christian—and therefore Western European—attitude towards money and commercial undertakings has changed, due, historically speaking, to what is known as the

Reformation. What may be called the true Christian ideal of money is almost unheard of, or unknown or disregarded, to-day. It survives in the ideals of a few of the old-fashioned aristocrats, who, while still maintaining their code to their own pecuniary disadvantage, are by now probably unaware that it was fashioned out of purely religious principles, which have existed and been taught since the dawn of Christianity. The change was decidedly for the worse, not for the better; it was a typical Kali Yug lowering of ideals, as unmistakable as the accompanying decline in art and architecture. "When man became wealthy", writes Mr. F. R. Webber in *Church Symbolism* (1927, p. 18), "and even before the wheels of the factory system had begun to whirr, an artistic decline set in. Read Mr. R. H. Tawney's *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, and escape that conclusion if you can." This reference led to the reading of Professor Tawney's book, and it would seem that such a conclusion cannot be escaped. The volume is a study of the highest interest, demonstrating, with a wealth of facts and unmistakable cogency of argument, that the rise of capitalistic enterprise, with its concomitant attitude towards both money and religion, was a direct consequence of the deliberate and prolonged disregard, by churchmen, of the early Christian ideal, leading to a divorce between religion and business affairs, and, by reaction, to the wide-spread debasement, not only of ordinary practice, but precisely of the *ideals* of business ethics. The ethics of organized *religious* business seems supinely to have followed suit. May not the time have come when the Theosophical leaven will begin to restore these ideals in both domains? Professor Tawney's book provides a new incentive to this end; it was published in 1926, and the author has been a Fellow of Balliol College, Oxford, and is now a Professor of Economic History in the University of London.

Before, however, attempting to survey in part, and perhaps interpret, Christian thought on the general subject of the "economic" use of money, it might be well to remind ourselves of what our own Movement has contributed directly, during the past fifty years, to elucidate the principles involved. Such principles, being the principles of the Lodge, are absolute, and inherently right in themselves. They foreshadow the actual practice of men of future ages and races. It will be easier, with this in mind, to measure the approximation of the exoteric Christian ideal, and to see more clearly in what directions effective future effort lies. Those who believe that the Lodge is preparing to send another Messenger in the near future; those who believe with Mr. J. F. B. Mitchell, as expressed in his inspiring article, "The Purpose of Chivalric Codes" (QUARTERLY, January, 1931), that: "As a man's code is, so is he", and that: "Obviously it follows that the way to grow, and the only way, is constantly to raise the level of the code by which one lives",—will wish first to understand, and then to bring their lives into conformity with, the Code of the Lodge in all financial matters, so as to meet the next Messenger as nearly as possible at that point, on prepared ground. It is obvious that the way properly to regard and administer finances concerns not merely every chêla, but every would-be servant of the Lodge in any capacity, however humble; and how far apart the Code of the Lodge is from that of the world, would hardly seem to need characterization.

Yet we do need reminders of just this antithesis, because we have grown accustomed to what *seems* so overwhelmingly inevitable in conditions about us, and have all adopted more or less of a compromise even with our own present ideals. It has become a characteristic of the Western mind to agree to the beauty and desirability of an ideal, and then to disregard it almost completely in action, a fact which the Maha Chohan himself called to our attention in his letter of 1881. It is not until confronted with a pressing personal problem that most men give heed to the implications of many of their ordinary acts. Chêlaship may be defined in terms of a growing self-consciousness, and of the ability to become self-moving, to seize the initiative away from the Karma of one's own past and that of one's race and country, and so to "stand alone" on the right-hand side. For a thousand years the Christian Church itself has, while preserving the ideal, at the same time deliberately acted contrarily to it. An incident told of Pope Innocent IV is unfortunately typical, and explains why lay-ideals have since fallen so low. The papal office, some claim, has always represented the great Western Master visibly on earth. Innocent IV has been characterized admiringly as "a consummate man of business, a believer, even to excess, in *Realpolitik*, and one of the ablest statesmen of his day". There was, perhaps on that account, little of "innocence" or other-worldliness about him. He is described as having stood with Thomas Aquinas on a balcony of the great Lateran Palace in Rome, watching a guarded caravan of mules, heavily laden with treasure, safely entering the Papal gates. Perhaps noting the expression on St. Thomas' face, he exclaimed, laughing: "The day is far past when the successors of Peter could say: 'Silver and gold have I none'." "Yes," replied the Angelic Doctor, "and equally so their ability to say to the lame and halt what followed: 'Rise up and walk'." Even such a Pope must have glimpsed then, if only for a moment, the direct relation between a cause and its effect. If such things pertain to Kali Yuga, must not the new Race be launched with better ideals and a higher common level of practice? Spiritual wickedness in high places cannot be permitted to hold the citadel of religion when the new "Golden Age" is inaugurated. Fortunately, as preparer for that great event, The Theosophical Society knows where to turn for the ideal, and also for the guidance to re-establish it on earth.

A fact which must give any serious member of the Society food for thought, is that Madame Blavatsky, the accredited Lodge Messenger of her century, had to earn her own living throughout her years of service, supporting herself by writing articles for the Russian papers, etc., while donating most of the proceeds of her books to the Work. Furthermore, she frequently rejected flattering financial offers in order to devote all the time possible to her theosophic writings. Recent letters of Mr. Judge in the QUARTERLY show how little money was available in his time for the Work, and how carefully he calculated the expenditure of every dollar. Certainly in the case of Madame Blavatsky, her poverty did not prevent her from appealing for and getting help on at least one occasion, narrated by Dr. Keightley, striking because of its very simplicity, when a five pound note to be used for an urgent charity was materialized through occult channels

at her request. H.P.B. at the time explained that "under certain circumstances of merit she had the right to call on certain funds and on certain centres in charge of her occult friends for such aid to others" (QUARTERLY, VIII, Oct., 1910; p. 120). But apparently chêlas could never assume that such money would be forthcoming *for their own use*. It has been said that since money is of the earth earthy, it is peculiarly the instrument of the Black Lodge. The implications of this, and the need for strict rules, therefore, are manifest. A chêla in the world, we are told, is expected to be *able* to earn his own living and fulfil pecuniary family obligations; in other words, to be master of his own environment and in no sense the inferior of, or dependent upon, worldly men, however capable.

A moment's thought will show how in important essentials this whole approach and mode of life is superior to that existing, not, of course, in Wall Street, but throughout the organized churches to-day, Protestant and Catholic alike. St. Francis of Assisi, whose spirit and effort were set against the worldly attitude towards money, was not wise enough to provide that monks must have it in them to earn their own living, and that his Order should refuse endowments. Laziness became an outstanding Franciscan fault. The churches one and all are notoriously acquisitive, as is even the Franciscan Order as a whole to-day; and the Roman Church is probably the richest single organization in the Western world. Chêlas must be completely detached from money, not as the negative result of total abstinence (which is, as far as "practical", the basis of exoteric religious practice), but by means of the harder and higher discipline of its right use—to be "in the world but not of it" in literal fact. No man can be a real or dependable soldier until he has learned to handle with the indifference of complete mastery the most dangerous explosives, and weapons which, improperly used, would deal death to his own comrades as readily as to the enemy.

There can hardly be any need to discuss the obvious fact, therefore, that a right attitude towards money is essential, and an attitude not limited to common honesty, but one of rigorous discipline and detachment. We live, however, in a "commercial age", an age in which the popular demand is not even that whatever gods may be should prosper business, but that all religion, with its religious principles and ideals, must keep "hands off" business. It should be needless to say, however, that a Lodge Messenger can hardly be expected to conform to worldly requirements, or to fit his ideas into modern economic theories. Many people know that the current attitude of business towards religion is not that of the Middle Ages; and the most frequent explanation of the backwardness, relative poverty, and economic ignorance of the Middle Ages is precisely that "theology", enforced by ecclesiastical courts, anathemas, and a subservient or coerced secular power, dictated the canons of commercialism. But what those religious principles and ideals, which endured for more than a thousand years, really were, is forgotten to-day. Forgotten, also, is the fact that behind the technical formulations of theology lay a spirit, upon which the Church Fathers and Mediæval theologians drew, or into which they entered,—for a Thomas Aquinas literally wrote on his knees. It is highly instructive to appreciate

this traditional ideal, and to study the course of events and of actions which led to so complete a *volte-face*—and to the virtual loss, for all practical purposes, of a body of ideals which approximated far more nearly that of the Lodge than anything now held. The transition cannot be dealt with here; but a brief review of the Mediæval *Code* will be attempted, together with some indication of the contrast with modern points of view. It should without doubt be easier to reclaim or to revive the dynamic ideals of our own Western religion, than to adopt a new code which might appear to be alien. Moreover, the Western Master's method seems to be, not to destroy but to fulfil, the old dispensations. We might also surmise that most of us must have lived during the Middle Ages; so the foundations of a truly "Christian" ideal may already have been laid in our characters, and the fact be that once we held worthier ideals of money than those which we may now have adopted because universally current to-day.

Throughout the Middle Ages the Church was a kind of state, superimposed upon, or interpenetrating, the kingdoms, feudal estates, and peoples of Europe. No one conceived of a society which "treated religion as a thing privately vital but publicly indifferent" (Tawney, *Religion and the Rise of Capitalism*, p. 6); on the contrary, religious sanctions for every activity of life, and not "natural" or "economic" or "rational" motives, were universally admitted, at least in theory, to be essential. Human life and progress had no meaning unless conceived in religious terms. Progress meant an advance towards the realization of the Kingdom of Heaven, not the stabilizing or equitable distribution of wealth, and the multiplication of contrivances to reduce manual labour, provide amusement, and lighten the burdens of life. Church and King and Emperor, knights and military leaders and scholars, one and all held "supernatural commissions",—a last echo of the days of Adept Kings, and colleges or schools of an initiated Priesthood. No man was popularly considered really to be King until properly consecrated—as witness Charles VII and the mission of Jeanne d'Arc—for even in the XVth century the instinct of the people was still sound, and the Church taught traditionally what it no longer understood,—though "the light eternal" of a great mystic theologian like Siger de Brabant could declare that after consecration the King carried "the living image of God within him."[1] The outer, visible estate and power of the Church merely reflected the extent to which the mind and thought of Europe were saturated with Christian conceptions, however exoteric, which were focussed in the one common mind of the Church—its teachings, its practices, its ideals. To-day the divorce is so complete between the different and differing religions, and all the rest of life—family, business, political, and even military—that it is hard to realize the extent of this earlier single religious interpenetration and influence. The final "end", or object of every man, as ostensibly of institutions, was to achieve salvation, and to be assured of heaven in the next world. This world was therefore still the God-given means to an other-worldly end,—not yet an end in

[1] Quoted by Louis Madelin in *Jeanne d'Arc*, by Marshal Foch and others; Paris, 1929, p. 69; cf. Dante's *Paradiso*, x. 133–8, for the characterization of Siger.

itself, as it has become to-day. Men, it is true, did not by any means live up to their code; but the code itself had maintained its level, and was rooted and grounded in religious principle. It is precisely the loss of this code that marks the decline of to-day. Not until the deliberate and prolonged corruption of the Church's hierarchy, from the top down, had spread its evil influence broadcast, was there any serious questioning of the ideal itself. "A cynical unscrupulousness in high places is not incompatible with a general belief in the validity of moral standards which are contradicted by it", writes Professor Tawney (p. 9); but though this can seem true for a while, events have nevertheless proved that what started as despairing criticism of the Church's iniquities gave place at length to open revolt, schism, and defiance. For this, the Church was primarily responsible. With revolt came the loss of much that was good, and the perversion of a righteous teaching which, while being proclaimed and enforced on the laity, had been belied in act by ecclesiastics. It is unfortunately true that the attainment of intelligence and power has tended to produce more "blackies" than saints, and the official Christian Church became the antithesis of Christianity.

The change from higher to lower ideals, which began with the debasement of ecclesiastical conduct, found its first outer expression in the "emancipation" of the secular state from religion. With the best of motives, rulers could no longer in conscience obey Popes and archbishops,—while the best of motives were as scarce amongst worldly rulers then as now. A separation became inevitable; and Machiavelli's famous formulation of the new ideas in the first quarter of the sixteenth century was a direct outcome of ecclesiastical misdemeanours. Moreover, at the same time that the new and secularized philosophy of government and human behaviour was being worked out, the knowledge of the great pagan classical achievements before Christianity was recovered, which reinforced the secular attitude and, because of their fruits, seemed to justify it; while at the same time a tremendous treasure of gold, silver and precious things came pouring into Europe from the plundering of the newly discovered Americas, which served to whet man's natural appetite for gold. With the rise of new governments, therefore, entirely independent of the Church and often openly hostile to it, and with the enormous expansion of trade and wealth, a new set of laws grew up, outside the ecclesiastical courts and canon law, which was deliberately designed to further business enterprise, and which no longer regarded the old religious sanctions. We take for granted this condition of affairs to-day, and suppose that what is, has always been. But such was neither the Christian theory, nor, in essentials, its practice: "Whatsoever ye do in word or deed, do all in the name of the Lord Jesus" (Col. iii. 17). Two centuries, roughly from 1500 to 1700, witnessed a momentous change in polarization. At the earlier date, "the typical economic systems are those of the schoolmen; the typical popular teaching is that of the sermon, or of such manuals as *Dives et Pauper;* the typical appeal in difficult cases of conscience is to the Bible, the Fathers, the canon law and its interpreters; the typical controversy is carried on in terms of morality and religion as regularly and inevitably as two centuries

later it is conducted in terms of economic expediency" (Tawney, p. 9). In England, even as late as the reign of Charles I, to discuss business solely in terms of profit and loss, or of expediency, was still considered disreputable and cynical. The desire to "get rich quick" smacked of defiance of God's will and His Providential ways with men. To make money, if it meant to take a profit from one's neighbour, so as to amass riches for oneself, was *usury*, and put a man outside the pale. The courts severely punished such an offender, and always made him restore the money he had gained. But after the Civil War in England, and the religious wars on the Continent, it became apparent that division among the Churches, and contradictory teaching emanating from high quarters, no longer left unquestioned a common standard of economic conduct, and the ecclesiastical courts found themselves unable to enforce their decisions, and soon became impotent. Furthermore, where religious tolerance existed—which implied a relaxation of all harsh measures to maintain and enforce the old commercial standards—trade flourished, as in Holland. The effect was inevitable, human nature and human appetites being what they are. Able business men, usually unscrupulous, acquired for themselves as much money as they could get, and worked out economic theories to justify the gratification of their desires. Their very success and prosperity, which in due time good and worthy people shared also, enabled them to overcome the prejudice grounded on the old religious ideals. God manifestly prospered their undertakings! So religious standards no longer restrained "economic appetites", and the so-called "economic virtues" first appeared.

But before 1500, such things as "economic appetites", by the gratification of which merchants and bankers could amass fortunes, were not paraded as virtues, nor were the public conveyances and country landscapes given over to the artificial stimulation of those appetites. The Schoolmen and Church Fathers applied, instead, simpler and more homely terms, namely, "avarice", "usury", "gluttony", "luxury", and the like. Asceticism, exemplified however imperfectly by the religious Orders, was the ideal; and the simple layman admired and revered where he did not, or felt that he could not, follow. Christ's Kingdom of Righteousness, the ever-watchful eye of ministering and protecting angels, the Communion of Saints, were still everyday realities. Worldly activities could not escape the heavenly witness, and so, sometimes perforce, accepted the heavenly standards. "Paradise is everywhere", Dante tells us, "though the grace of the highest good is not shed everywhere in the same degree" (*Par.*, iii. 89–90)—expressing in matchless phrase the beliefs not merely of a truly Christian poet, but of his age.

The first and fundamental assumption of the Middle Ages, therefore, was that the ultimate standard of human activities and institutions was religion. Could there be a sharper contrast between this and the modern assumption of "economic expediency"? Professor Tawney seems justly to characterize the temper of English commercial enterprises in the last quarter of the XVIIth century (during the Restoration after the Civil War), as "a ruthless materialism, determined at all costs to conquer world-markets from France and Holland,

and prepared to sacrifice every other consideration to their economic ambitions" (p. 268). Two centuries later, Ruskin was constrained to write of his own countrymen: "I said in my last paper that nothing in history had ever been so disgraceful to human intellect as the acceptance among us of the common doctrines of political economy as a science. I have many grounds for saying this, but one of the chief may be given in a few words. I know no previous instance in history of a nation's establishing a systematic disobedience to the first principles of its professed religion. The writings which we (verbally) esteem as divine, not only denounce the love of money as the source of all evil, and as an idolatry abhorred of the Deity, but declare mammon service to be the accurate and irreconcilable opposite of God's service: and, whenever they speak of riches absolute, and poverty absolute, declare woe to the rich, and blessing to the poor. Whereupon we forthwith investigate a science of becoming rich as the shortest road to national prosperity" (*Unto This Last*, end of Essay III).

This spirit, typical of man's lower, selfish, and acquisitive nature, had once been held in check by the religious teaching of the Church. Exoteric religion, whatever its limitations, is a step in the right direction; and the religious *code* of the Christian Middle Ages was better than any purely worldly or business *code* to-day. Religion has a spiritual end, dependent upon moral attainment; and therefore it envisages results, not in terms of expediency, but in terms of principle based on whatever vision it has of everlasting truth,—on that which is inherent in the very nature of the Universe. To-day, any idea of a spiritual end is held to be chimerical; nothing is visualized above material prosperity, on which human happiness is supposed to depend. So a lowering of the physical standards of living is held to be a crime against civilization, a hideous backward step, provoking an outcry far louder than the most terrible lowering of moral standards, as, for example, the murder of the Russian Imperial family, which evoked no single official protest, any more than did the subsequent *governmental* sale of the victims' stolen personal effects. Science having greatly enlarged the average man's idea of the duration of time, without having given him the least indication of his own reincarnation throughout that stupendous sweep, the millennium of an Archbishop Usher, if there will ever be such a thing, is held to be indefinitely remote, of no practical personal concern, and so is left to take care of itself. Similarly, the Kingdom of Heaven, if there be any outside the dreams of men, is confounded with the millennium; and both are denominated "mystical concepts". What the Western world wants to-day are "practical" ideals; and the practical is something which man's lower nature can grasp without taxing either his imagination or his faith. The Great War demonstrated that men are not yet incapable of responding to an ideal; but even so, in the case of several of the nations involved, the demands of an ideal were enormously reinforced by a very evident necessity. But when the appeal of the ideal involves money, where is there evidence of response to idealism? To-day, the remission of the debts of the Allies by the United States is again being publicly discussed; but the majority of those advocating it make their

appeal on the ground that remission would pay more than collection. Men of consequence are prepared to state openly that: "*Aside* from the *question* of the justice of cancellation, I am firmly convinced it would be good business for our government to initiate a reduction in these debts at this time."[2] An appeal to justice, honour, and righteousness has so far failed, and would still fail; therefore those who would get action must appeal to business "horse sense" and to economic expediency. When ideals and economic expediency clash, ideals are brushed aside as unessential, however ornamental; while if the two are occasionally seen to coincide, and the masses can be convinced that for once they really do, then all good people are outspokenly delighted, cynics are amused, while politicians can wax, not merely rhetorical, but eloquent.

In the Middle Ages, however, it was still taught, and believed, that "the perfect happiness of man consists in the vision of the Divine Essence", and that this "perfect happiness is not possible without a righteous (*recte*) will"[3] —things which no accumulation of gold would ever buy, and which experience has taught are actually impeded by even a slight gratification of "economic appetites". For "Divine Essence" we might substitute the term "the Masters" —with all that that implies. "It is impossible for man's happiness to consist in any created good," writes Aquinas, Pope Innocent IV notwithstanding.[4] Such bald statements are actually far more needed to-day than in the XIIIth century when Aquinas made them, for to-day even theologians might hesitate to proclaim such a doctrine too often and too loudly. Mediæval Society, accepting the teaching of Christianity, had a genuine and dynamic code; but it should be obvious that "expediency" and "appetites", based on a "ruthless materialism", can never become the basis for a code in any true sense. Admitting that the sins of mankind have always been numberless and always black; that "from the middle of the thirteenth century a continuous wail arises against the iniquity of the Church, and its burden may be summed up in the one word, 'avarice'" (Tawney, p. 29); that therefore the very citadel of religion no longer reverenced the Gospel according to St. Mark, but "according to Marks of Silver",[5]—nevertheless the Middle Ages had an ideal, and achieved as a result a virtue, which has been submerged to-day, and which it must surely be the part of Theosophical leaven to reintroduce, purified and reinforced, into the minds and hearts of men.

It is a mistake to picture the mediæval man of affairs as too naïve, or too ignorant, economically speaking, to recognize where his immediate and personal economic advantages lay. On the contrary, he saw them; but because he had a code which made a genuine appeal to something finer and better than his sole material prosperity, he rejected them. Jewish money-lenders and Lombard bankers were outcasts and became a byword, though ecclesiastics did not hesitate to do business secretly with them; and finally, though Dante put the

[2] Albert W. Wiggin, "head of the world's largest bank", as quoted in *The New York Times*, January 12, 1931.
[3] Thomas Aquinas, *Summa Theologica*, $I^a$ $II^{ae}$, Quæst. iii, art. vii; and Quæst. iv, art. iv.
[4] *Summa*, $I^a$ $II^{ae}$, Q. ii, art. viii.
[5] From a 13th century MS. known as "Carmina Burana", extracts from which are translated by G. G. Coulton in *A Mediæval Garner*, 1910, pp. 346–7.

Cahorsine money-lenders in hell, Pope Innocent IV gave them the title of "peculiar sons of the Roman Church" (*Romanæ ecclesiæ filii speciales;* Tawney, p. 29). Nevertheless, the universal theory was that "economic advantages" had to be subordinated to the real business of life, which was salvation. Material riches are a part of worldly life; men cannot support themselves without them; but because they provoke powerful appetites, like other strong passions, they must be repressed, not given a free field. "There is no place in mediæval theory for economic activity which is not related to a moral end"; and, "to found a science of society upon the assumption that the appetite for economic gain is . . . to be accepted, like other natural forces, as an inevitable and self-evident *datum*, would have appeared to the mediæval thinker as hardly less irrational or less immoral than to make the premise . . . pugnacity" (Tawney, pp. 31–2). To "better oneself" in the Middle Ages meant either to advance in royal favour, or to enter religion; to-day it means to make, or to be in a position to make, more money. "Now it is lawful to seek of God in prayer temporal good things", wrote Aquinas, again epitomizing Christian teaching, "but not, however, putting them in the first place, as though setting our end therein, but regarding them as helps whereby we are assisted in tending towards blessedness, inasmuch as they support the life of the body and are of service to us as instruments in performing acts of virtue."[6] So as to leave no possibility of misapprehension, he adds later: "Temporal goods are to be despised as hindering us from the love and service (*timore*) of God", though, ideally, "they are not to be feared", because they help us "as instruments to attain those things that pertain to Divine fear and love."[7] Surely this ideal is one which the chêla might make his own without qualification. As the sainted Archbishop Antonio of Florence (c. 1450) wrote: "Riches exist for man, not man for riches."

The Mediæval Code had its foundation in three main currents of thought, which represented, as they should, the best of the past; first, Christ's teaching which reinforced the Old Testament practice; second, Roman commercial ethics and procedure; and third, Greek ideals as they affected Roman theory and the earlier Church Fathers. Together they throw into bold relief the utter materialism and selfishness of to-day,—though, alas, these ancient ideals remained too often in the realms of abstract ideas. The field is large and full of interest, but can only be briefly summarized here. Perhaps the heart of the matter lies in the actual use of money, or capital, for it is the modern methods of making money "work", of deriving income or interest from capital given out for use, which primarily distinguishes this age as a capitalistic one from those which preceded it. Naturally the influence of Christ's teaching, together with the Old Testament legislation, provided the principal basis for the Mediæval Code; and it will probably be a surprise to discover how far the modern Jew has fallen from his own original standards. Inevitably, back of any code as to the use of money, stands the Code of the Lodge; and an Initiate, such as

[6] *Summa*, II$^a$ II$^{æ}$, Quæst. lxxxiii, art. vi. The condensed Latin phrases require an expanded rendering.
[7] II$^a$ II$^{æ}$, Q. cxxvi, art. 1, reply to objection 3.

a Moses or a Plato, in the nature of things must have expressed the Code of the Lodge in terms fitting the times and the people addressed. Plato in his *Republic* (Bk. II, 357) spoke disparagingly of "the business of money-making, which *no one* would choose for its own sake"—an assumption refreshingly at variance with modern conceptions; and he pointed out that the more men prosper in trade, "the more they think of this and the less they think of virtue; for when riches and virtue are placed together in the scales of the balance, the one always rises as the other falls" (Bk. VIII, 550). Aristotle defined money, not as a thing in itself, which it has now become to all intents and purposes in the popular mind, but as "a sort of medium" which has, "not a natural, but a conventional existence" (*Ethics*, Bk. V, cap. viii).

As for taking accumulated wealth, or capital, and lending it at interest, or making it "work" in the sense of "turning it over", rather than oneself using it creatively,—such a thing was forbidden, and denominated "usury." Usury has come now to mean iniquitous or illegally high interest, but formerly it meant interest of any kind on money lent. In the quotations that follow, usury always means the taking of *any* interest or increment on a loan. Aristotle stated outright in his *Politics* (I. 10) that "to make money by usury is exceedingly unnatural". Plutarch, an initiated Greek whose life almost spanned the first century of Christianity, spoke of "the strong and unpleasant smell of usury", and wrote a delightful and penetrating essay "Against Running into Debt, or Taking Up Money Upon Usury".[7a] Money, in Rome, was once upon a time minted as a sacred thing at the temple of Juno, and derived its name, *monēta*, from a surname of that goddess. Roman law forbade the taking of interest upon money lent, until a late date, and even then, prohibited the collection in interest of more than the equal of the original sum loaned, no matter how long the debt ran, nor how high was the rate of interest originally agreed upon. This concession to money-lenders was later specifically repudiated by the Church Fathers and by canon law.

The principles underlying this attitude towards the use of money are nowhere more clearly defined than amongst the Jews. It is not always remembered that to take interest was forbidden by the Old Testament legislation, and no Jew charged another Jew interest for money loaned;—though with typical concession to the hardness of their hearts, exception was made where strangers were concerned.[8] "Thou shalt not lend upon usury to thy brother; usury of money, usury of victuals, usury of anything that is lent upon usury: Unto a stranger thou mayest lend upon usury; but unto thy brother thou shalt not lend upon usury: that the Lord thy God may bless thee" etc. (Deut., xxiii, 19-20); "And if thy brother be waxen poor, and fallen in decay with thee; then

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[7a] *Plutarch's Lives and Writings*, ed. by A. H. Clough and Professor W. W. Goodman, New York, 1905; Vol. X, pp. 412–424.

[8] This exception enabled the Jew money-lenders of Mediæval Europe to control the money-market and banking. For Christians, all men were brethren; but as that did not result in any readiness to lend to each other or to hold all things in common, frequently the only money accessible was that of the Jews. Finally, Christians could no longer endure the strain, and they took to lending to one another at interest as avidly as the Jew to strangers. To-day the Christian and Jewish precepts alike are utterly disregarded and forgotten.

shalt thou relieve him: yea, though he be a stranger, or a sojourner; that he may live with thee. Take thou no usury of him, or increase: but fear thy God; that thy brother may live with thee. Thou shalt not give him thy money upon usury, nor lend him thy victuals for increase" (Levit., xxv, 35-6-7; cf. Exodus, xxii, 25; Ezek., xviii, 8, 13, 17; Ps. xv, 5). The Jew for the most part lived up to his code with amazing strictness, sparing his brother, but finding an outlet for human nature in grinding his neighbours. We find Philo, as might be expected from one whom H.P.B. calls an Initiate, emphasizing the underlying principles clearly: "Moses prohibits a man from lending upon usury to his brother, meaning by brother not only him who is born of the same parents as oneself, but everyone who is a fellow citizen or a fellow countryman, since it is not just to exact offspring from money, as a farmer does from his cattle. And he enjoins his subjects not on that account to hold back and to be more slow to contribute to the necessities of others; but rather, with open hands and willing spirits cheerfully to give to those who are in need,—believing that gratitude may in some degree be looked upon as interest repaid in a time of greater prosperity for what was loaned in an hour of necessity,—and as paid back voluntarily by the recipient of the kindness. And if a person be unwilling to make a gift outright, still, let him anyhow make a loan, so as to provide freely and cheerfully the temporary use of what is wanted, without expecting to receive back anything but the principal. For in this way the poor will not become poorer, by being compelled to return more than they received; nor will those be committing any wrong if they receive back that only which they lent. And yet they will not receive nothing more in return, for with the principal—instead of the interest which they have not required—they will gain the best and most honourable of all human things, as they will have been kind and magnanimous, and will have earned goodwill and a good name. And what acquisition equals this? For verily the mightiest king appears poor and helpless if he is compared with one single virtue; for he has only inanimate riches stored in his coffers or in the earth, but the wealth of virtue is stored up in the superior part of the soul; and that purest of all essences, heaven, claims itself a share in that, as also does the Creator and Father of the Universe, God.

"Therefore we must look upon and call the riches of money-changers and usurers as poverty, though they appear to themselves to be mighty kings, whereas they have never even seen that wealth which is itself endowed with sight, no, not even in their dreams. And these men are so extravagant in wickedness, that if they lack money, they make usurious loans even of food, lending it on condition of receiving back more than they lent. Accordingly, such men will at once contribute to those who ask; and will even prepare a famine or scarcity at a time of plenty and abundance, and make a profit out of the hunger of the stomachs of miserable men, weighing out the food in a scale, and taking care not to give overweight. Therefore he [Moses] necessarily commands those who live under his sacred régime, to eschew every kind of such revenues; for all such pursuits are the sign of a thoroughly slavish and selfish

mind, which must be changed into savageness and become like that of brute beasts, before it could adopt them."[9]

The Rabbis interpreted and applied these Mosaic principles with distinct fairness, and aimed at preventing the borrower from suffering any detriment, and the lender from gaining any advantage. The following quotations contrast so directly with modern usages, that they speak for themselves. In the Tannaite Midrash on Exodus (the School of Ishmael) one reads: "If a man lends a *sela* (worth four *denars*) on condition of receiving five *denars* at the expiration of the term, or two *seahs* of wheat to receive three, this is usury."[9a] "Increase", the word used in Leviticus, is interpreted as follows: "A man (A) buys of another (B) a quantity of wheat at the market price of twenty-five *denars* a *kor*, and pays cash for it, but leaves the grain warehoused with the seller (B). The market price goes up to thirty, and (A) claims delivery of the wheat, proposing to sell it and with the proceeds buy wine. The original seller (B) offers to buy back the wheat at the current price of thirty *denars* [quite legitimate], and to give to (A) wine of equivalent value at the then ruling market price, having at the time of the negotiation no wine in his possession. This is constructively usurious, because in the interval before delivery the price of wine may advance, and (A) may thus receive more than his due." On this Professor Moore comments: "The effect of this and similar regulations was to prohibit dealing in futures which have so large a place in modern speculation." Another example is equally illuminating. "A man may not give a shop-keeper produce to sell with an agreement to share equally the profits made in disposing of it at retail, nor give him money to buy at wholesale and sell at retail on the same conditions, unless he pays him wages, because, if the venture proves unprofitable, the shop-keeper will be out of his time and labour, besides the risk of loss by fire or larceny, or by depreciation." Half of modern business would cease if such principles were applied, but who can say that men's souls might not be benefited! All the persons involved in any way in a usurious transaction were guilty—the lender, the borrower, the surety, the witnesses, and even the scrivener who drew up the contract. Interest actually paid might be recovered at law during the lifetime of the lender (but not from his estate). Is it to be wondered at that "a usurer is represented by Rabbi Simeon ben Yoḥai as saying: Our master Moses was wise and his law is true; but if he had known what profit there was in the business, he would not have written the law".[10] Is it not the spirit of the outcast usurer of old that has inherited the earth to-day, abrogating wisdom and true laws, and substituting fat profits and economic virtues? Plutarch tells us that usurers "laugh at those natural philosophers who hold that nothing can be made of nothing and of that which

[9] *Peri Philanthropias;* text of Sigismund Galenius, Frankfort, 1691, pp. 701–2. It may be found under a different title and placed as part of a treatise *On Three Virtues*, by Yonge in the Bohn translation, Vol. III, pp. 430–31, which was of assistance in making the above translation. Cf. for a briefer and less illuminating exposition, Josephus, *Antiquities*, Bk. IV, cap. viii, sec. 25.

[9a] M. Baba Meṣi'a, 5, 1; quoted by Prof. George Foot Moore, of Harvard, in *Judaism In The First Centuries of the Christian Era, The Age of the Tannaim*, Cambridge, 1927, Vol. II, p. 143. The following citations are quoted from the same work, pp. 143–6.

[10] Baba Meṣi'a, 75b; quoted in a foot-note by Prof. Moore, *op. cit.*, p. 145.

had no existence; but with them usury is made and engendered of that which neither is nor ever was". Persians, he tells us, "repute lying to be a sin only in a second degree. . . . Now there are not in the whole world any people who are oftener guilty of lying than usurers, nor that practise more unfaithfulness in their day-books, in which they set down that they have delivered such a sum of money to such a person, to whom they have not given nigh so much. And the moving cause of their lying is pure avarice, not want or poverty, but an insatiable desire of always having more, the end of which is neither pleasurable nor profitable to themselves. . . . The usurer . . . reaps no other advantage from it but only that he now and then takes his book of accounts, and reads in it . . . whence his money came which he is always turning, winding, and increasing."

From these quotations it is evident that the issue was clearly joined; and Mediæval Christianity recognized quite as fully exactly where the conflict lay. What, and what only, can be the object, the end, of trading for a profit and gaining interest and increase on one's money? Simply to get, and to have, more money, with all that that implies. Christ specifically said: "And if ye lend to them of whom ye hope to receive, What thank have ye? for sinners also lend to sinners, to receive as much again. But love ye your enemies, and do good, and lend, hoping for nothing again: and your reward shall be great, and ye shall be the children of the Highest" (St. Luke, vi, 34-5). The Jew who heard him could comprehend this, but the modern business man does not even listen,—so far has the left hand of progress carried him to superior heights of worldly knowledge. To make or take a *profit* was obviously to grasp after the material and base things of this world, in contradistinction to something honestly produced or earned by the sweat of one's brow, thus increasing wealth. The craftsman, with hand or brain, labours to earn a living; and he rises in the scale of life in direct proportion to his industry and talents. The trader seeks, not merely a livelihood, but a profit, and profit upon profit. Such profits are the fruit of another's toil and production, and are therefore made at the expense of one's neighbour. The trader has a right to payment for his services as an agent, and no more. To use his position as middleman to amass wealth from *profits* is to offend against charity, as Bunyan pointed out.[11] The man who makes money out of the turn of the market, or who takes advantage of, or even creates, a shortage, as Wyclif says, *must* be wicked, or he could not have been poor yesterday and rich to-day.[12] Gratian, whose great summary of all the Church's canons (1139-42) expressed the mind of the Church for centuries, put the distinction thus in his *Decretals*: "Whosoever buys a thing, not that he may sell it whole and unchanged, but that it may be a material for fashioning something, he is no merchant. But the man who buys it in order that he may gain by

[11] *The Life and Death of Mr. Badman*, in *The Complete Works of John Bunyan*, ed. by Rev. Henry Stebbing, London and New York, Vol. IV, pp. 46 ff.

[12] *On the Seven Deadly Sins*, in *Select English Works of John Wyclif*, ed. by Thomas Arnold, Oxford, 1871; Vol. III, p. 153. "Bot men of lawe and merchauntis, and chapmen, and viteleres, synnen more in avarice then done pore laboreres. And this [is the] token hereof; for now ben thei pore, and now ben thei ful riche, for wronges that thei done."

selling it again unchanged and as he bought it, that man is of the buyers and sellers who are cast forth from God's temple."[13] And Thomas Aquinas, approving of proper trade, whereby "one commodity is exchanged for another, or money taken in exchange for a commodity, in order to satisfy the needs of life", asserts positively that trade "for a profit" is "justly deserving of blame, because, considered in itself, it satisfies the greed for gain, which knows no limit and tends to infinity."[14] Furthermore, trading, not to satisfy natural needs, but merely for its own sake, and "considered in itself, has a certain debasement attaching thereto, in so far as, by its very nature, it does not imply a virtuous or necessary end" (*ibid.*).

One cannot but feel that we have here a Code based on a genuine apprehension, not only of right and wrong, but of spiritual principle. Would not a Master concur with the statement that, intrinsically, trading for profit "does not imply a virtuous end"? Certainly gentlemen in England and France in the 17th century, and in many cases up to the generation preceding our own, steeped in the Church's traditional teaching, not only felt strongly about the reprehensible nature of trade, but, however impecunious, would not debase themselves by entering into business. A gentleman, if impoverished, could find some suitable work, or he could starve, but he could not lower his colours. Honour was, in actual practice, esteemed above riches; and the innate reaction of the gentleman was grounded on the recognition of a principle which might be expressed in the words of one of the Pythagoric sentences of Demophilus, centuries ago: "A lover of riches is necessarily unjust; and the unjust is necessarily profane towards Divinity, and lawless with respect to men"; which might be coupled with another: "A timid man bears armour against himself; and a fool employs riches for the same purpose." Professor Tawney sums up the Mediæval Code with admirable succinctness as follows: "To take usury is contrary to Scripture; it is contrary to Aristotle; it is contrary to nature, for it is to live without labour; it is to sell time, which belongs to God, for the advantage of wicked men; it is to rob those who use the money lent, and to whom, since they make it profitable, the profits should belong; it is unjust in itself, for the benefit of the loan to the borrower cannot exceed the value of the principal sum lent him; it is defiance of sound juristic principles, for when a loan of money is made, the property in the thing lent passes to the borrower, and why should the creditor demand payment from a man who is merely using what is now his own?" (pp. 43-4).

When it comes to the practical application in present commercial life of this Code—which as far as it goes, has represented the Christian Code—we are faced with another series of problems, which cannot be dealt with here. The best modern writer on the subject still seems to be no less discarded and neglected a prophet than Ruskin, whose courageously downright declaration of principle, as against the primary assumption of avarice, led to such a storm of protest,

[13] *Decretum*, Pt. I, Distinctio lxxxviii, cap. xi; quoted by Tawney, p. 35. Cf. the Homily xxxvii in a treatise *Opus Imperfectum*, ascribed to St. John Chrysostom, which reads: "What is trade but buying at a cheap price with the purpose of retailing at a higher price? Such were the tradesmen whom our Lord cast out of the temple."

[14] II$^{a}$ II$^{æ}$, Quæst. lxxvii, art. iv.

that his articles in the *Cornhill* magazine had to be discontinued abruptly by its editor, his personal friend Thackeray. Those which were published, appeared later under the title *Unto This Last*—taken from the parable of the idle workmen in the market place;—while Ruskin completed his thesis in *Munera Pulveris*, sometimes entitled *Essays On Political Economy*. He lays it down as axiomatic that: "No human actions ever were intended by the Maker of men to be guided by balances of expediency, but by balances of justice," for the whole question "resolves itself finally into one of abstract justice." He says that "the real reason of the general lowness of estimate in which the profession of commerce is held [written in 1862!] . . . will be found to lie in the fact that the merchant is presumed to act always selfishly. His work may be very necessary to the community; but the motive of it is understood to be wholly personal. The merchant's first object in all his dealings must be (the public believes) to get as much for himself, and leave as little to his neighbours (or customer) as possible"; and Ruskin asks pertinently "whether, among national manufactures, that of Souls of a good quality may not turn out a quite leadingly lucrative one?" (*Unto This Last*). His whole plea is that traders, who *are* necessary to civilized life, should live up to the same standard as that of the soldier, whose "trade, verily and essentially, is not slaying, but being slain", and that it is as true for the merchant as for the soldier, priest or physician that "the man who does not know when to die, does not know how to live." Therefore: "Sixpences have to be lost as well as lives, under a sense of duty"; and, "while many a zealous person loses his life in trying to teach the form of a gospel, very few will lose a hundred pounds in showing the practice of one" (*ibid.*). In the light of such ideals—which in fact are nothing more than the teachings of Christ strictly and fearlessly applied—we may see why a statement once made by Emerson is true: "A nation is dedicated to trade for some centuries; that occupies the vast majority of men every day for all that long duration. Yet the last day it is not more elevated than the first day, and cannot command our respect."[15]

If this, therefore, be a commercial age, given over to the selfish acquisition of personal riches, while the essence of the soldier's life is that of readiness to lay down his life, the need for war as a corrective becomes manifest. And it seems that it is precisely to, and through, war, that a beneficent Karma has been leading, and is again about to lead, the souls of men. There are more reasons than one why the present situation "will really need a Genghis Khan to do it justice", but one of them will be to overcome, by sheer force of necessity, the concentration of a whole race on material well-being and the gratification of economic appetites. Celestial Economics starts with a different principle, and altruism—a favourite word of H.P.B.'s—is at the foundation of occultism. "Men so universally draw their characters after the pattern of their times that great regard is due to any who, spurning the character and humour of an ignoble age, act upon principles not apprehended by the vulgar" (Emerson, *ibid.*, I, 259).

Our task, as members of the Theosophical Movement, is clear: first, not to lose ourselves in a cloud of words, or, on the other hand, forget that "the letter

[15] *Emerson's Journal*, ed. by Edward Waldo Emerson and Waldo Emerson Forbes, Vol. VII, p. 8.

killeth, but the spirit giveth life"; second, to face the facts, recognizing, for instance, that the logic of the Mediæval Code, as summarized by Professor Tawney, would make it usurious to accept interest from a Bank on our current balance, or interest payments on Government, Railroad or other bonds, or rent from our tenants if we were the owners of land or of houses; third, as we cannot change the character of our civilization overnight, or retire from the world and live like hermits on the produce of our own labour (seeing that this most happy condition would, in most cases, either be impossible or a self-indulgence),—we must strive ceaselessly, though living in the world, not to be of the world, and must keep alive within us, and within each other, our vision of the ideal, and of the lamentable conditions which make it impracticable at present to live as that ideal ordains,—except in spirit, for in spirit we are free, not bound, and in spirit we can hate the necessities under which we labour, can love and desire the nobler Code which was, and which again will be, if only our desire for it prove stronger than our worldliness. QUÆSITOR.

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*Let temporal things serve thy use, but eternal be the object of thy desire.*—
THOMAS À KEMPIS.

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*Beware of the pride of humility; and having renounced the desire to attract by thy fine raiment, seek not to call forth attention by thy rags.*—ST. JEROME.

# A MEDITATION

*Giving thanks always for all things unto God and the Father in the name of our Lord Jesus Christ.*—PAUL TO THE EPHESIANS.

*Rejoice evermore.*—PAUL TO THE THESSALONIANS.

TO whom or to what, should I, as a student of Theosophy, give thanks? I can begin, in any case, by feeling grateful, and by expressing that feeling, to those from whom I receive kindness or spiritual help among my friends and companions. Do I fail in this from self-absorption, from shyness, or for any other reason?

To give thanks to "the Lords of Karma" is very abstract, very remote, so far as I am concerned; but my own Master is one of the Lords of Karma, just because he is a Master; and certainly he holds back from me personally "still worse evils", creating around me a "Guardian Wall" of protection—as the Notes to *The Voice of the Silence* make clear. This means far more than appears on the surface. It means that I owe to him every blessing, every good thing, that comes into my life, and that even its trials and temptations, out of the overwhelming accumulation from my own wrong-doing of the past, are proportioned by him according to my strength. Thus he converts them into aids to growth—if met and used properly by me—instead of into calamities and extinctions.

Am I grateful for this? Am I grateful merely in a general way, or do I specifically thank him throughout the day for *all* things? Do I, in other words, *say* that I am grateful, and at the same time deplore, resent, and inwardly rebel against this or that necessity under which I labour?—against my inability to do or get something on which my desire is set? Do I inwardly croak and groan, think of my life as "hard", and mentally pick on this or the other "handicap" as making things almost intolerable? Do I blame my surroundings or my associates for my failures? In brief, am I a hopeless ass?

In any case, it is incredible that I am entirely free from these cheap and vulgar weaknesses, or that I could ever live to give thanks enough. My friends are friends through the everlasting mercy: not through any merit or beauty of mine; it is thanks to the same mercy that I know of Theosophy, that I desire good rather than evil, that I have a roof over my head and a bed in which to sleep (for the inherent idiocy of lower nature would have deprived me of these years ago, unless that mercy had prevailed),—that I can still look up into the face of heaven, and laugh.

My Karma—like the Karma of the world—would blot me out, if it were not for that Guardian Wall of unthinkable compassion. *In the long run*, "rigid justice rules the world", for some day before the day "Be with Us", I must pay back what I owe; but meanwhile! Oh debt piled on debt,—endless, boundless,

utterly undeserved, irrational, divine, never-ceasing generosity! That *I* should have a friend: is not that in itself a miracle? May the Lord give me of *his* gratitude that I may be grateful to him. . . . Dear Lord, in spite of all this talk, I am not grateful. I take so much for granted, as I accept the presence of a tree, which has always been there,—part of the landscape, which does not move, and for which, therefore, thanks are needless. I do not mean to grumble, but a quite ordinary pain, if it interferes with what I choose to call my work, is enough to start a Book of Lamentations in the privacy of my mind. Cure me of such blindness; help me to sense thy blessing in all that happens, in all that is,—and if I do not sense it, not to make a grievance out of that, but to know that it is there, remembering also that they are blessed who have not seen, "and yet have believed". . . . Give me of thy gratitude, that I may be grateful to all to whom I owe it, for all that life brings me,—to thee for everything.

B. A. R.

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*Eternal is his gladness who rejoices in an eternal good.*—S. AUGUSTINE.

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*Yes, here, in this poor, miserable, hampered, despicable Actual, wherein thou even now standest, here or nowhere is thy Ideal: work it out therefrom; and working, believe, live, be free.*—CARLYLE.

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*Men continually forget that happiness is a condition of mind and not a disposition of circumstances . . . confusing happiness with the means of happiness, sacrificing the first for the attainment of the second.*—LECKY.

# KARMA AND BATTLE

WE usually accept it as a fact, when we meditate on the Law of Karma or discuss it with others, that our personal Karma must, of necessity, take a very long time to work out. We are often singularly rigid in our views in this respect, and as we grow in age and in experience, we do not grow in the grace of flexibility. Our studies, and what we have been told, make it clear to us that we are now contending, both inwardly and outwardly, with the results of our own wrong thoughts and actions in past lives. We visualize ourselves going on in much the same way, taking things up again, life after life, at approximately the point at which we left off at the end of the last incarnation, and carrying them a bit further. We feel sure that there is progress on our part, we feel confident that there will be progress in the future. But we think that this progress must of necessity be uniform, that all the elements of our nature must advance together, that we must maintain an even development as we go forward. As we bend our energies for the moment on some backward quality within us, on some particular fault or weakness, in our effort to push it up into line and so prevent what we think of as the retarding process, we feel that progress is indeed slow, and we are thankful for the mercifulness of the great Law, for the hope which it holds out, for the assurance that no right effort is ever wasted or lost, for the certainty that in the long future we shall have the time that we so sorely need.

Indeed, we are right in thus feeling thankful. But there is danger in resting too long in this spirit of thankfulness, for, if we do, it is only a step to feeling that, after all, there is no hurry about it. We run the risk of dwelling to such an extent upon the chances and the opportunities which we are to have in future lives, that we fail to recognize as such those which are ours here and now, and so fail, too, to seize upon them and use them as a means to immediate and more rapid progress and growth. We should do well always to remember that the rapidity with which we can overcome our personal Karma must, of necessity, depend in large measure upon the intensity of our present desire, of our present effort. If our desire and our effort are sufficiently strong now, or if we can make them so; if we can reinforce them with all the resources of our imagination and of our will, and increase these resources as we progress; if this intensity of effort and desire, and this reinforcement, are steadfastly persisted in and steadily continued,—it must be possible to work out certain elements of our personal Karma much more rapidly than we realize at present, with the result that we shall be under no necessity whatever of carrying them over into future lives.

All this involves the right use of desire, imagination and will, the great creative forces, the great liberating powers. How does it "work", practically speaking? Let us make use of our imagination, and let us assume, as a practical illustration, the theoretical case of a man holding an important position in the

world of affairs. This man, at the age of twenty-five, at the very start of his business career, is hard, unjust, grasping, even dishonourable in his business methods and dealings. Because of his attitude in regard to money matters, he does a great wrong to certain people with whom he is then associated in business, and makes them suffer in countless other ways as a result. Let us assume further that almost immediately this man, for good and sufficient reasons, realizes fully just what he has done, and has a complete change of heart. He abhors the evil which he has brought about, still more does he abhor the evil within himself—the selfishness, the cruelty and the greed—which have made his action possible. The whole force of his desire is bent to the effort to atone. He turns completely about. He spends the next twenty-five years of his life in trying to undo, to make up for, the wrong which he has done. More than this, he traces the connection between his inner sins and weaknesses and the form of their outer expression, he sets himself to make over his whole nature so that these sins and faults may be transformed into their opposite virtues. He goes about it with understanding, through the light which has been increasingly given him because of his true and entire repentance. He uses his imagination to the fullest extent to think of ways in which he can gain his objective. He bends every effort of his will to the accomplishment of his purpose. He acts for these twenty-five years with an ever-increasing intensity of desire and effort, with an ever-increasing rightness of principle. He carries this into all the relations of life, not alone into business. His own life, both business and personal, becomes a great inspiration, of untold help to countless new people in a great diversity of ways. He is able to reach out, to give help, because he is able to understand. It is what he has become, what he has made himself, that counts.

Moreover, he goes back and does his utmost to help, directly, those whom he has so greatly wronged, those who have suffered so much through him, because of what he did at the age of twenty-five. He seeks them out. He makes every possible effort to set things right again for them. He continues this effort over a period of years. But these people are bitter, revengeful, vindictive; their one idea is to "get back at him". Not only do they consistently repulse all of the advances which he makes, but they do their utmost to persecute him, to spread malicious reports about him, to undermine him whenever and wherever they can. Nothing daunted, not one whit discouraged, this man accepts all this as part of the personal Karma which he has created for himself, and fights on,—for he is a great fighter, a "first-class fighting man", once he has turned. For all of these twenty-five years he is continually attacking his lower nature at all points, so that it is continually on the defensive, constantly losing ground and in retreat. He leaves the evil within himself no opportunity, he seizes upon every inner advantage gained and makes use of it to the fullest extent, in order to make more rapid progress, to go as far as he can, towards the objective which he has set for himself, and which is continually becoming more clearly defined as his vision increases and as his self-conquest becomes more and more complete.

What is the result of all this, for this man, at the age of fifty? Surely the intensity of his desire to atone for the wrong which he has done to these people, surely the very opposition which they have set up to his every effort on their behalf and the vindictive attitude which they have adopted towards him, must have operated to speed-up the working out of his personal Karma as regards them,—perhaps even to cancel, to obliterate a large element of it entirely. But, if not, what of the transformation in the inner nature of the man himself? Surely that in itself was sufficient, and more than sufficient, to wipe out the balance of that early wrongdoing in the eyes of the great Law. For consider the extent of that transformation, and its results. Entirely apart from these particular people, the intensity of his inner desire and of his inner effort over all these years, his continued right use and constant development of all the qualities which he possessed and of others which he acquired, the expression of all this in deeds of self-sacrifice and acts of kindness as regards others, must have established for him a Karmic credit balance on the right side. This transformation, and its results, must have helped all along the line, must have modified and accelerated the working out of other phases of his personal Karma which were not in any way directly connected with this particular early wrongdoing, so that in the general quickening which took place, in the speeding up of the whole Karmic process which ensued, there was an entire change of relative values. The former things had passed away; all things had become new. We forget too often the extent to which the various phases of our Karma overlap, the degree to which our efforts and progress in certain directions will help to improve the situation for us at other points,—pull them up into line, or over the line, as it were. This man whom we have been considering, may well, at the age of fifty, have found himself, had he known it, in the position of having completely eliminated the necessity of carrying over into another life the Karma of an early wrong act which, once realized and acted upon, through the right use of imagination and will, had become a tremendously creative and liberating force. No need for him to face a long, laborious process life after life. His freedom, in this life, had been gained. His victory had been won, and with speed, here and now.

Marshal Foch's book, the *Principles of War*, has often been mentioned, both in meetings of The Theosophical Society and in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY, as being a Manual of the Inner Life, a Guide to Chêlaship, if read and interpreted theosophically. In view of this, a more recent book, the *Memoirs of Marshal Foch*, translated by Colonel Bentley Mott, is of intense interest. It might be said that, in the earlier book, there are laid down the fundamental principles upon which military strategy and tactics are based; we are given the theory and we recognize it as true, as universal in its application, and, therefore, applicable not only to the outer conflict in the world between the Powers of Light and the Forces of Darkness, but also to the inner warfare in which we ourselves are engaged. In the *Memoirs*, we find these fundamental principles expressed in Marshal Foch's preliminary instructions and observations, in his Battle Orders, to his commanding generals. We read, for instance, in regard to some specific situation in which those in his Armies may have assisted at the time,

without having then been conscious of its ramifications, his estimate of the situation; the dispositions of the enemy and of the Allied Forces, as seen in the perspective which was his alone; the mission which he proposed for the attacking units; the definite ways in which he suggested that this mission must be carried out. We remember what happened at the time as a result of the execution of his commands, we remember the success of the outcome, and, in the light of retrospect, we can also see that no other possible method or plan would have served, and that the success was gained because the conception of the plan itself was based on a fundamental principle that was universal. Marshal Foch's observations and his Battle Orders were practical, concrete directions as to what to do about it, and, as such, they can constantly be applied to the problems of our own inner warfare.

As a direct illustration, let us remind ourselves for a moment of the military situation as it was on the first day of November, 1918, just ten days before the Armistice. The long German line from the Vosges to the Sea was giving way; everywhere it was being struck by the Allied Armies in rapid succession with powerful sledge-hammer blows; everywhere the enemy was losing ground, in retreat. On that day the First American Army, and the Fourth French Army on its left, were about to start a powerful joint attack, which had as its objective unblocking the line of the Aisne from the East. An army offensive, worked out as it is on the maps beforehand, is designed to reach certain successive lines on certain successive days, the position of each of these lines depending upon the nature of the terrain, the probable strength of the enemy's resistance at various points, the character and ability of the other attacking troops on the flanks, and, finally, upon the part which this particular offensive is to play in the larger purpose of the High Command. The battle, if it goes as planned, thus resolves itself into a succession of phases, which are numbered. Marshal Foch thought that the preliminary plans for the attack, which had been submitted to him by General Pétain and General Pershing, were too rigid. He thought that far too much emphasis was being laid upon alignment, upon the necessity for all the attacking elements being up on the first phase line, with contact on the flanks maintained, before the attack could proceed to the second phase. He thought that speed, and the possibility of rapid exploitation of success gained, were being sacrificed by this rigidity. Accordingly, he issued the following memorandum to General Pétain and General Pershing:

> "Important results such as we are pursuing in the present stage of the war, when we are confronted by an enemy whose exhaustion increases every day, can only be achieved by progress as rapid and as deep as possible.
>
> "Troops launched into an attack need not think of anything except *the direction of their attack*. In that direction they must go as far as they can, attacking and manœuvring against the resisting enemy with no preoccupation as to alignment—units which have got the furthest forward working for the advantage of those temporarily

> delayed. They must operate, not against lines indicated *a priori* and suggested by the nature of the ground, but against the enemy; and once they have seized him, they must never let go their grip".

We must bear always in mind that these suggestions referred to an enemy giving ground, in confusion and in retreat. The attacking forces, under such conditions, "must go as far as they can". And so must we, in the inner life, in the inner warfare, under similar conditions. The parallel is perfect. We must steadfastly set our faces to go forward, through all resistance, at those points where the best and the most rapid progress can be made, with no thought of alignment; with no thought as to whether or not we are going to be able to make this or that quality within us do its part; with no thought of anything except our direction, our Goal. As we do this, and as we progress, we, too, shall find that those elements within us which have got the furthest forward will work for the advantage of our weaker qualities; will pull them up into the attacking line, as it were, stimulating them to do their part. Surely this is just what happened to that man in business, whose problem we have been considering. If we will free ourselves from the rigidity of our views, from our too narrow preconceptions, as to the nature and working of Karmic Law, we shall in this way, as he did, at once accelerate the working out of our personal Karma, progress in one direction improving the situation for us at other points. Above all, as he found, is it essential, once *we* have seized upon our inner enemy, that we, too, must never let go our grip, for what we want, in terms of Karma, is not victory in some nebulous future life, but Victory with speed, Victory here and now.

STUART DUDLEY.

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*Few things can resist him who is able to conquer himself.*—LOUIS XIV.

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*The brave soul can mend even disaster.*—CATHERINE OF RUSSIA.

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*Destiny bears us to our lot, and Destiny is our own will.*—D'ISRAELI.

# ON THE SCREEN OF TIME

THE Philosopher asked if he might make a statement. "I was reported, and correctly reported, in the last 'Screen of Time'," he said, "as having quoted a cable from London to *The New York Times* in which it was alleged that the German Kaiser and the former German Crown Prince were to be reinstated as Knights of the Order of the Garter, at the request of the King of England, as the King wished 'to forget old quarrels'. I need not repeat my comments, except this: 'It is charitable, as well as polite, to assume that Ramsay Macdonald instigated the King'.

"That cable was dated August 14th. The information it contained was absolutely false, as, on the best authority, I have since learned with pleasure. I regret having misled the QUARTERLY and its readers in regard to a matter of fact, but I do not regret any of my comment because there are fifty other facts, beyond dispute, which more than justify the spirit and trend of what I said. I concluded by asking: 'Is it right or *manly* to have the memory of a butterfly? Can England have sunk so low as that!'

"Macdonald is Prime Minister of England, for the second or third time since the War; and Macdonald, throughout the War, was so Pro-German and Pacifist that the National Seamen's and Firemen's Union, under the leadership of Havelock Wilson, resolved that their members would neither sail nor work in any ship carrying Macdonald or his associates, when in May, 1917, Macdonald had applied for a passport to go to Russia to consult with the Workmen's and Soldiers' Soviets. At the infamous Leeds Conference of that year, he was elected to the committee for action, the primary object of which was to bring the War to an end so far as Britain was concerned through the outbreak of a revolution which would paralyse military operations.

"We can forgive a man anything if he sees the error of his ways, and admits it; but Macdonald has done nothing of the kind. In a booklet entitled *Potted Biographies*, published by the Boswell Printing and Publishing Co., 10 Essex Street, London, which gives the War utterances and activities of leaders of the Labour Party in England, it is stated (p. 61) that at Leicester, on April 25th, 1929, Macdonald said: 'By hook or by crook, diplomatic relations should be established with Russia', and now, *supported by the Conservative Party*, Macdonald, in the name of the King, receives an Ambassador from the Soviet, duly accredited to the Court of St. James's!

"In the same booklet, on the same page, I find that, speaking at Wolverhampton, he was reported by the *Daily Herald* (then his own organ) of October 29th, 1928, to have declared that the General Strike in England was 'the manifestation of human solidarity, was one of the most glorious things that this twentieth century had produced'.

"Macdonald is and always has been an avowed and ardent Pacifist. Can

any one deny that his attitude toward Germany to-day is the same as it was during the War? Was not and is not his chief desire, where Germans are concerned, to embrace them all and call them Comrades (of the Soviet variety), regardless of past, present, or future conduct? None the less, he is Prime Minister of England, in a government supposed to be representative. That he would advise and urge the King 'to forget old quarrels', and to prove it by what *he* would consider a 'noble gesture' in the direction of the Kaiser and Crown Prince, instead of seeming improbable, seemed highly likely—as the foreign editor of *The New York Times* must have thought, when he published that despatch; while no one has ever suggested that the King, in spite of his admirable qualities, his self-sacrificing sense of duty, and his unlimited respect for the Constitution, has inherited the major characteristics of his grandmother, Queen Victoria. England, in my humble opinion, would be better off to-day if he had. But enough on that subject. I am suspecting that our friend in the arm-chair has something on his mind, as I had."

"I have", said one of the editors of the QUARTERLY, who had joined our informal gathering while the Philosopher had been speaking. "The QUARTERLY wants to express pleasure and gratitude for letters showing warm appreciation of its contents and helpfulness. Further than that, I should like our readers to believe that we are human, and that letters from some of them, in which total inability to pay for the QUARTERLY is frankly confessed, have moved us deeply. We are anxious to convey to the writers our truest sympathy, and, with that, a word of cheer. The times *are* hard—no one can have escaped that experience, though some have suffered more than others; but there is and always is, a silver lining to the cloud. We may think of our own needs, or we may think of the whole world's gain,—for the world is gaining spiritually as a result of this depression. If I were speaking face to face, I should add: 'If the world gains, will not *you* be content to suffer a little longer,—believing, as you can and should, that Masters are grateful for your patience, for your courage, and willingness to share some fraction of their burden with them. You are not alone in your suffering: they understand, they sympathize—even with the grief of a child over its broken toy, and no less with the heart of the aged and infirm and weary. It may seem as if there were no hope for you; as if there were only endurance left. Well, *then* is the time to say: I will go out with the banner of faith flying, hailing the dawn'."

"I am glad you spoke of not being alone", said the Historian. "A friend of mine who was desperately ill and who suffered terribly for days on end, told me afterwards that he had found himself saying constantly, when the torment was at its worst, 'Thou knowest, thou knowest', which was all he could say and all he could think. Later, he wondered why he had said it, though he knew it had been a comfort, and had recognized instantly the truth of another friend's explanation, to whom, on his recovery, he had related his experience, and who had suggested that he had instinctively asserted his faith in a divine companionship, in a sympathy and understanding deeper than was possible in those who stood visibly by his bedside, and who did not, could not understand. I do

not think we can overestimate the extent to which a feeling of loneliness—or, rather, of 'there is no one who understands', 'no one who can really sympathize' —enters into, and forms the last straw, as it were, of most human suffering. Suffering is not always or often rational; sympathy frequently is. It is a divine and most rare gift to be able wholly to sympathize with a grief which seems, not only illogical but fantastic. Take, for instance, the grief of a woman over the loss of a husband who beat her and bullied her up to the day of his death: to sense that she may be suffering agonies of remorse for one reason or another, would be impossible unless the perceptions of the heart had temporarily pushed aside the thick perceptions of the head. We must learn to see beneath the surface, if ever we are to acquire sympathy, and we must cure ourselves of the tendency which is strong in many of us—stronger, perhaps, in men than in women—to allow our over-anxiety to nullify the little sympathy of which we are capable."

"Just what do you mean by that?" asked the Student.

"Suppose someone we love is greatly worried, to the point of being ill from it: naturally we suffer because of their suffering, and naturally we want to comfort them, and, incidentally, ourselves. We try, and fail. Then we feel impotent, and, becoming irritated with ourselves, and exasperated by our failure, we unconsciously convey an impression of irritation instead of sympathy, making things worse instead of better as a result of our intervention. It is, in fact, appallingly difficult to make our sympathy effective, and I know of few greater incentives for spiritual effort than recognition of our defects under that head."

"Is there no cure for all this sorrow and pain, anxiety and heartbreak?" asked our visitor, almost in a tone of despair.

"That question was discussed in the 'Screen' last July", the Historian answered. "I can do little more than paraphrase what was said then.

"So far as I am aware, only four methods of cure have ever been suggested. First, there is the 'cure' of the materialistic social reformer—whether a Socialist, Communist, or Humanitarian makes little difference—who has so low an opinion of human nature as to imagine that plenty to eat and drink, with a minimum of work to do, will solve the problem if anything will. A few years ago, actual want was almost unknown on this continent, yet the total of suffering then was certainly as great as it is to-day, when there are bread-lines in every city. We know nothing, if we have not discovered that anguish of soul may be harder to bear than anguish of body, and that men suffer as acutely from ills of the imagination—some dread or disappointment, not to speak of jealousy, envy and their fruits—as from ills entirely physical.

"Another method of cure that has been suggested can appeal to the very few only, and to hardly any in the western world,—the method, widely advocated in the Orient, of realizing vividly the transitory and illusory nature both of the objective universe and of the perceiving personality, accompanied by self-identification with the changeless and eternal.

"A third method was taught by Gautama Buddha: that of compassion; the escape from suffering by sympathy for the sufferings of others; the transfer of

attention, in other words, by means of love, from self to other selves. Thus, when a mother came to him in utmost grief over the loss of her only child, it is related that he told her to stop at each house in a certain street of the city, and to bring back word to him of what she heard. When she returned, she fell on her knees and told him: sorrow of some kind in every home she had visited, grief sometimes greater than her own, terror or pain or woe. Then he said in effect: Such is life; suffering is inseparable from living; to expect otherwise adds bitterness to the pain: and the cause of suffering is thirst (*Tanha*), thirst for pleasure, thirst for existence, thirst for prosperity, thirst that leads to rebirth on earth, accompanied by pleasure and lust. 'And this is the Noble Truth of the Path which leads to the cessation of suffering: that noble eightfold Path, that is to say, Right views (convictions), Right aspirations, Right speech, Right conduct, Right means of livelihood, Right effort, Right recollection ("mindfulness", according to another translation), Right meditation (the Pâli word being *Samâdhi*, "Right contemplation" may be suggested as an alternative).' So the woman was converted, and found peace.

"The fourth method of cure was taught by the Master Christ: the Crucifix. 'Is it nothing to you, all ye that pass by? behold and see if there be any sorrow like unto my sorrow!' That, it seems to me, gives the essence of the Christian solution: compassion for the One—whoever that One may be—who embodies for us the world of divinity and of the Lodge. This compassion, born of love and gratitude, worship and sympathy, necessarily includes compassion for all upon which, and upon whom, our own Master pours out his infinite compassion; and, under this head, we need to discriminate, not assuming that all suffering is the same in his eyes, regardless of origin and of the nature and reaction of that which suffers.

"Orthodox Christianity has gone far to deprive this appeal of any meaning or power, since Protestantism (not knowing the difference between Soul and Spirit) has exiled the Christian Master to 'the right hand of God' and to a state of unbroken bliss and glory, while Rome has caged him in the 'tabernacle of the altar', in spite of the efforts of that Master—as through the so-called 'Revelation of the Sacred Heart' to Margaret-Mary—to bring his continued humanity, and sacrifice, within the comprehension of the simplest of his followers. 'The ingratitude and forgetfulness of men', he is recorded as having said to her, 'are more painful to me than all the sufferings of my Passion. . . . My love has caused me to sacrifice all for men, without their making me any return. . . . Will none have compassion on me, none sympathize and share my sorrow in the piteous condition to which sinners have brought me?'

"It would be difficult, by the way, to imagine a greater sacrifice than for a *man*, a warrior and king, to allow his sufferings to be known, and thus, in a sense, to become an object of pity,—not for his own sake, but for the sake of those to whom he appeals,—too immersed in their own affairs to notice or care, except, perhaps, here and there. It is a dreadful, a heart-breaking picture—appalling evidence of our need—and I doubt if anyone takes it seriously, for, if we did, what room would be left for our trifling worries and exasperations!

In the parable of the Good Samaritan, the priest and the Levite passed by on the other side. We don't do that; we don't even see the man who 'fell among thieves' (the fate of every Lodge messenger): we are so absorbed in our little duties, little fears or appetites or sins or anxieties or disappointments, that we see nothing unless it bears directly upon our obsession. If the victim of the parable had had a steam fog-horn within reach, and had let off a blast in our direction, we should simply have clapped hands to ears so as not to lose the thread of our emotional or mental weaving.

"Love and compassion, therefore, are the essence both of the Buddhist and Christian 'cures', though neither, when properly understood, pretends to accomplish more than the removal of the bitter poison of self from the suffering which, in other respects, cannot fail to become greater the further we progress toward a more perfect manhood. The more we love, the more we suffer; but the gulf between the suffering of hell and the suffering which springs from love, is all the difference between blindness and vision, despair and ecstasy.

"Stated in other terms, while anything which diverts the attention from self and its pain or distress, lifts the burden temporarily and serves as a palliative, to effect a cure in the sense I have suggested, we need to re-adjust our outlook upon life, to revise our scale of values, and to see transitory things as wholly unimportant in comparison with the needs and purposes of our Master, —wholly unimportant, that is, except in so far as our attitude towards them is concerned, which affects him vitally, seeing that it vitally affects his life, *which is his Father's life*, in us."

"'Man, know thyself'," the Engineer now said, "seems to be the foundation of any real cure—though, as you have intimated, it is not a question of how to escape from sorrow, or how to eliminate it from the lives of others—manifest impossiblities until humanity surrenders its will to the divine will. Rather is it a question of changing the polarity of the suffering that is inevitable; and clearly this cannot be done unless we desire ardently to do it, while we shall never be able to arouse that desire unless we learn to revolt from and hate our lower nature, and to love and aspire to become our higher. Nor shall we be able to do that until we see the truth, or in any case something of the truth, about each,—learning to know ourselves that we may know God. Theosophy, being the source and essence of every great religion, including Hinduism, sees the transmutation of man into more than man as the objective of all these methods (except the first!), and holds there can be no permanent cure for human suffering until this transmutation has taken place. But it sees suffering as an aid, not as an obstacle to that attainment, for suffering serves to detach us from the glamour of transitory things, and to turn our attention to the changeless and eternal as our true home and being; and it sees right self-identification, which may be either the fruit of compassion, or its cause, as the only means by which spiritual consciousness can be made permanent,—the instrument of 'fixation', I think the Alchemists would have called it."

"Excuse me," said the Orientalist, "but don't you think that so-called right self-identification, as usually practised in the East, tends to induce self-satisfac-

tion rather than enlightenment, and stagnation rather than union with the divine?"

"I do", the Engineer replied; "but that is because it is wrong, not right, self-identification, as I know you will agree. Properly understood and properly practised, right self-identification necessarily results in change and growth,—in transubstantiation, as occultism explains that term."

"Theosophists are mystics, are they not?"

There was a hint of defiance in the way this question was suddenly shot at us by our visitor, who had been introduced by the Engineer, in the hope, I suspect, that some of us might carry conviction where he had failed; for the Engineer is a born missionary, though he repudiates the "accusation" heatedly,—proof in itself, we remind him, that we are right.

Instinctively we left it to the Ancient, always loath to speak, to reply to our visitor's question, our united silence finally compelling him to do so.

"Unfortunately", he said, "very few students of Theosophy are mystics".

"Fortunately, I should have thought,—if that be so", our visitor replied.

"Why, may I ask?"

"Because a mystic, to my mind, suggests either one whose ideas are foggy and incommunicable, or one who hints mysteriously of unutterable things in the background."

The Ancient laughed. "If that is what the word suggests to you", he said, "I do not wonder that you replied as you did; but you must know as well as I do that 'mystic' is derived, through the Latin, from the Greek word *mustēs*, which meant one who had been initiated into the Mysteries. To-day, of course, it does not mean as much as that, for there are poets, truly mystical, who knew nothing of the Greek or any other Mysteries as such, just as there have been devotees of exoteric religion, both in the East and in the West, who stand out as mystics,—by which I mean, men and women who saw or who sensed the spirit as well as the letter, and who regarded the letter chiefly as a symbol of reality."

"Such as?"

"In the West, to name only a few: Juliana of Norwich, St. John of the Cross, St. Teresa of Avila, William Law, John Wesley, George Fox."

There was a pause. Then the Ancient, becoming interested in his subject, resumed it voluntarily. "I do not blame you for your misunderstanding", he said. "The word is sadly misused. Comparatively few, even among those who write on the subject, seem to realize that the true mystic necessarily is a realist. Looking upon the phenomenal world as relatively an illusion, seeking always for the hidden truth and goodness and beauty which the visible symbol strives to express, his one desire and aim is to see the real in the unreal, while the materialist, whose notion of reality is limited to objective existence, lives in a world of shadows which he mistakes perpetually for substance.

"Take, for instance, the attitude of the non-mystic toward human nature, and toward all the problems which hinge on a right interpretation of the nature of man: on the one hand you have those who see in man merely a superior

type of animal, the product of animal evolution, whose religion, social standards and 'ideals' are the cumbering survival of primitive nature-worship, blood sacrifices, tribal taboos, and so forth. This means that nothing is inherently sacred, that conscience is the voice of racial superstition, and that any code of morals, especially in matters of sex, is at best a convention, imposed by society, but without intrinsic warrant. Oddly enough, and quite illogically, many who proclaim that view are leading Pacifists."

"Excuse me for interrupting you", said our visitor, "but why illogical?"

"Because, granting the premises, cold logic would decree that men and nations should fight it out, so that the fittest, i.e., from that point of view, the strongest and cleverest, should survive. Logically—still granting those premises—if Smith prefers Brown's wife to his own, Smith should kill Brown and annex his wife, forcibly in case of need. As a matter of fact, the German slogan, 'might makes right', is the direct and logical outcome of the 'superior animal' theory.

"On the other hand, as opposite pole, stand those whose philosophy, if any, is usually of the vaguest, but whose sentimentality induces the belief that human nature is just too sweet for anything when patted on the back and coaxed and loved and told how sweet it is. This extreme produces about as many Pacifists as the other, for extremes always meet. Many of the clergy are sticky with such views. Some educators, also, proceed on the theory that everyone is born good, that evil develops as the result of restraint, and that if only we would allow child-nature to express itself freely, at its own will and pleasure, the world would become a paradise. So far as that is concerned, while I do not pretend to know anything about little girls, and am prepared to admit that all of them may be little angels, I claim to know a good deal about boys, and have found that most of them are little devils: cruel to one another, cruel to animals, no better than savages. This, I think, must be universal experience, allowing always for the exceptions which, by contrast, prove the rule,—though it does not confirm the 'superior animal' hypothesis, because, as I shall explain in a moment, time and a hard struggle are needed before that which 'comes down from above' can gain even a hearing in the congeries we call our consciousness, while only at intervals does it really govern, until a stage in evolution has been reached that is far ahead of the average,—so far ahead, that the average would not believe such a condition possible.

"Even among so-called Theosophists, there is much muddled thinking, or lack of thinking, under this head. Some have said that man is essentially divine; but so is a dog or a cat; so is everything that exists. We need to discriminate. Man, as we know him ordinarily, is an animal who has come up from below, and whose mental and moral processes are more intricate than those of other animals for the reason that, touching him from above, striving to reach down and to convert him into a human being, is a reincarnating ego or soul. It is the interaction between the spirit of this higher ego, and the spirit of the beast which man for the most part still is, that constitutes personal consciousness, and, incidentally, the struggle between good and evil which many of our

modern 'advanced thinkers' repudiate as a superstition. Man, in other words, and still speaking generally, is *potentially* divine, but is a very long way indeed from being more at present than a semi-intellectual and thoroughly depraved animal,—depraved, inasmuch as he has used the efflux from above, not for divine purposes, but to add zest to his lusts, cunning to his intelligence, ambition to his desires, extravagance to an animal's legitimate love of comfort. He has deflected everything, both from above and below, to gratify himself and his perversities. Fortunately there always have been and always will be exceptions: those who have fought their way through the mire of personal existence, and who form that nucleus of the human kingdom which all men may enter whenever they become willing to pay the price."

"What price?" asked our visitor.

"The price of self-conquest, of fixity of will; the price of maintaining right self-identification; and love of the divine, of one's Master—of the good, the true, and the truly beautiful—must be our sole motive.

"Facing the facts about ourselves, we shall become able to face the facts around us; but I repeat: it is only the mystic who can do this, because it is only the mystic who can be a realist. Realism, as the world knows it, usually sees nothing but the putrescent scum on some side-water of the river of life."

"Where does your soul or reincarnating ego come from?" asked our visitor. "Special creation?"

"No", replied the Ancient. "Why should you limit evolution to matter? Is not that a rather narrow view? Theosophy, echoing the original Wisdom Religion—the source of all others—says that three major lines of evolution meet in man: the material, the intellectual, the spiritual, and that everything in the manifested universe has *made* itself what it is, and is the product, in that sense, of ages of growth, of struggle, of evolution."

"When are we going to arrive?"

"Never,— if you regard Time as a reality, which we do not. How can growth cease? Yet there are intermediate goals, and longer or shorter periods of rest. 'As above, so below'. Here we have day and night, waking and sleeping, summer and winter, a period of 'life' followed by a period of 'death'. The same is true of worlds and solar systems and universes."

"Not a very cheerful view, is it?"

"You would prefer to become extinct?"

"I think on the whole I should."

"Perhaps you will. In the long run, we get what we want." And the Ancient seemed amused.

"I do not follow you", said our visitor. "I thought you believed in immortality."

"We do; but, like everything else, immortality has to be *won*. It is not bestowed on us out of nothing. Nature gives us opportunities; no more. We can reject them if we choose. She always keeps her melting-pot in reserve.

"People often confuse survival after death—animals survive death—with immortality. Only that which is worthy of eternal life can be immortal. Very

few of us could wish *all* of ourselves even to survive, while the idea of all of ourselves, bad and good together, lasting for ever, would be what some people would call devastating. Or so *I* should think. Try to work it out on the basis of what you would really, honestly pray for, and the result will be very close to the truth; but remember that no two people would pray for exactly the same thing, so that any attempt to compress the truth into a sentence, or into a dogma, would inevitably result in a form of untruth."

At this stage the Ancient turned to the Historian. "What have you been reading?" he asked. He felt, I think, that our visitor needed time for reflection.

"Things which bear very directly upon your topic", the Historian replied. "You said, for instance, that we ought to be realists. Well, I have been reading the daily papers, and have come to the conclusion, so far as the international situation is concerned, that while there are exceptions—members of the T.S. are exceptions, and there are many others—this country as a whole would not care if England were blown to atoms over-night, would perhaps be rather relieved, as having one rival the less; would not care if Germany were to tear France limb from limb and were to enslave the survivors in perpetuity, as the people of the Occupied Territory were enslaved during the War; for this country's one idea, one desire, one prayer at present is to hear once more the jingle of money in its pockets, once more to feel big and rich. Self-centredness never sees beyond its nose, and a day of reckoning would not even be thought of as possible,—which bears, I suggest, on the nature of man as he is.

"Then I have been reading an article in the October 1st *Revue des deux Mondes*, entitled *Un Prélude à l'Invasion de la Belgique* (*1904*), by Maurice Paléologue, French Ambassador at Petrograd during the War. It is really an important contribution to history, besides serving to illustrate much that you said, both about the nature of man, and about realism being an aspect of true mysticism, —one reason, presumably, why 'There is no religion higher than Truth' is the motto of The Theosophical Society,—for certainly we need an æon or so of training in the difficult art of seeing facts as they are. I have often thought of modern business as an instance of how the high gods use even man's monstrosities for his ultimate salvation, for business does make it advantageous to distinguish between fact and fancy. Man's ability to see what he wants to see, and to see nothing unless he wants to see it, is almost unlimited. He is a creator if ever there was one,—though his creations, as a rule, are ridiculously short-lived, which, by the way, is what gives him his chance to learn better. I remember, in 1928, a banker of unusually long and wide experience assuring me that the Federal Reserve system would thereafter make panics or long depressions impossible. In my ignorance, I half believed him! Possibly he has learned better; I know that I have. He believed what he desired to believe: it was a comfortable belief, and man adores his comfort. Further, it was a flattering belief, because, as a banker, he shared in the glory of a banking invention, which he thought unparalleled and perfect. Finally, his belief helped him to sell me something which he was very anxious to sell; so, between the desire to

feel comfortable, the desire to shine, and the desire for profit, he saw the Federal Reserve system as guaranteeing us prosperity for evermore.

"In much the same way—for the desire not to see the unpleasant when it is there, is just as strong as the desire to see the pleasant when it isn't there—it seems as if England and America had tacitly agreed to ignore, and if necessary to suppress the facts about Germany's past and present war-psychosis. It is as if they said: 'All men are natural-born democrats, brothers, and peace-lovers; therefore Germans, being men, must likewise be natural-born democrats, brothers, and peace-lovers. Q.E.D., Finis.' Point out this or that fact, and the answer seems to be: 'Do not pay any attention to such things, which are discouraging, depressing, and which tend to shake one's faith in the soothing, soul-satisfying proposition that "All men are",' etc., as before.

"Tell them the naked and obvious truth: that Germany is exactly the same Germany that she was in 1914 and for years before 1914, with the addition of unlimited rancour and wounded vanity; tell them that failure to recognize wrong-doing has resulted—as almost invariably happens—in a genuine and insane sense of grievance, so that the majority of Germans have reached the point of believing absolutely that, with Russia at first as fellow-conspirator, it was France and England who precipitated the war, fought it unfairly, and who have been unfair and treacherous ever since,—and our newspaper- and magazine-editors, as well as our 'statesmen', will waive all that aside as needlessly disturbing, and as inconceivable anyhow because contrary to the more pleasant proposition that 'All men are natural-born democrats, brothers, and peace-lovers; therefore Germans, being men, must be ditto.'

"Even France, in spite of the many invasions she has suffered, is not free from this self-imposed illusion, though, as M. Paléologue's article illustrates, an articulate minority does its best to keep the majority awake; and because it is unlikely, for the reasons I have suggested, that there will be any mention, in the English or American press, of what M. Paléologue has to say, I have brought his article with me in the hope that you will notice it in the 'Screen'."

"What does Paléologue say?" asked the Recorder.

"He gives extracts from his diary, from April, 1904, to September, 1906, when he occupied a confidential position in the French Foreign Office, at first under Delcassé. The outstanding feature is the revelation that, in 1904, a German officer, believed to be a General attached to the Headquarters Staff in Berlin, betrayed to the French authorities the details of the German plan of invasion through Belgium as actually carried out in 1914, stating that he was well aware of his ignominy, but that he had been treated with even greater ignominy, and—*je me venge!* The French Chief-of-Staff, General Pendezec, believed that the plan as revealed would be carried out as soon as German diplomacy had prepared the necessary preliminaries. Unfortunately, General Brugère, who was the French Generalissimo, and his successors in that position, did not believe that Germany could dispose of sufficient troops to attempt so wide an encircling movement, and therefore refused to modify their own 'Plan

XV' of 1903, which proved to be, as everyone now knows, a hopeless miscalculation.

"Paléologue then shows how narrowly France escaped being over-run and over-powered at that time, when she was even less prepared, and had fewer reserves, than in 1914. The visit of the Czar to France in 1896 had cemented the Franco-Russian Convention of 1892, binding both countries to aid the other if attacked by Germany; but in 1904 Russia was at war with Japan, and was greatly weakened in consequence, the result being that the German Emperor and his advisers, thought that their chance had come. William, in a speech at Carlsruhe, appealed to his people to remember the battles of Woerth, of Wissembourg and of Sedan, of the Franco-Prussian War of 1870. Then, as Edward VII had finally succeeded (1904) in consummating the *entente cordiale* with France, William jumped at his chance when the Dogger Bank incident of October, 1904, strained the relations of England and Russia almost to the breaking point: he wrote to the Emperor Nicholas that, in the event of an Anglo-Russian war, 'I will put my fleet at your disposal, and I will force France to march with us'. His game was, of course, to egg Russia on as against England, and to get them to bleed one another white, in Afghanistan or on the frontiers of India; then to attack France, with neither England nor Russia able to help her. If it had not been for Delcassé's prompt intervention, and for King Edward's clear understanding of his nephew's treachery, Russia would have fallen into the trap, and France, miserably unprepared, would have been destroyed."

"I have forgotten the Dogger Bank incident: what was it?" asked our visitor.

"The Russian fleet was on its way to the Far East, to relieve Port Arthur. Passing through the North Sea at night, not far from the English coast, it met a group of English fishing-smacks on the Dogger Bank, and, mistaking them for Japanese torpedo boats, turned all its guns on the innocent fishermen, killing many of them, and sinking, as I remember it, most of their vessels. It was so ridiculous to suppose that Japanese torpedo boats *could* be in the North Sea, that the English newspapers jumped to the conclusion that the attack and 'murder', as they described it, must have been deliberate. There was a terrible outcry. It developed later that the Russian naval officers had been suffering from nerves,—and *vodka*. The comments of the English press made Russia as furious as England,—a wonderful opportunity for Germany. . . . But I cannot give you an epitome of the article; it covers too much ground; you must read it for yourselves. It proves once more that all through those years, Germany was manœuvring ceaselessly to get a strangle-hold on France,—preparing to attack then, as she is preparing to attack now. . . . Which reminds me of a book.

"I said that, to all appearances, both England and America prefer not to see unpleasant facts, especially about Germany. Any other attitude is so unusual that I should like to mention this recent publication in London by Wishart and Co., written by Cecil F. Melville, called *The Russian Face of Germany: An account of the secret military relations between the German and Soviet-Russian Governments*. The book is inexpensive (six shillings to be precise); could be imported through the Quarterly Book Department or any American bookseller,

and ought to be widely read, though I am well aware it never will be. The author shows how Germany, to circumvent the terms of the Versailles Treaty which she signed (another 'scrap of paper'), established aeroplane, chemical, and munition factories in Russia, and now has huge supplies of shells, heavy guns, poison gas, bombing planes and other war material, some of it stored in Soviet arsenals, some of it shipped into German territory under forged bills of lading. The author also proves that the closest co-operation exists between the German and Russian general staffs. Wickham Steed, in the London *Sunday Times*, remarked that the book 'should be read by all who wish to perceive the meaning of the German claim for "Equality" in armaments;' but he probably knows as well as I do how very few wish to perceive anything of the sort. In any case it seems to me to be the duty of the QUARTERLY to advertize it as widely as we can. It should be noted, in passing, that Germany has paid and is paying for this illicit armament, intended for use against France and Poland, with money 'written off' by England and France from Germany's War debts to them, as well as with money borrowed in America, either from or through American banks. It should be noted also that France would never have consented to these vast reductions in Germany's War liabilities except for the pressure—actual threats—of this country and of England, Dawes and Young being used as instruments for that purpose. Nothing I regret more than that France, years ago, did not tell her former Allies to go to the devil. Europe would be at peace to-day if she had done so. The factors of perpetual barter and uncertainty would have been removed.

"Still another book which bears on the same general subject, and which is far more likely to be read, is *War Memories*, by the Princess Marie de Croÿ. Written with great restraint, and with evident anxiety to acknowledge every kindness shown by any German, its story of her experience in occupied Belgium during the War, and then of her imprisonment in Germany—ten years' penal servitude was the sentence—for having co-operated with Nurse Cavell and others in helping stray British and French soldiers to escape through Holland, is not only intensely interesting, but shows all over again how extraordinarily brutal the German war-machine was, and, of course, still is. Belgian women and girls, some mere children, of all classes, for 'crimes' such as 'not having denounced a neighbour whom she knew to have hidden a bicycle' (two years' imprisonment), 'for having given food to two Russian prisoners' (five years),—were sent as convicts to a prison in Germany where the worst and lowest type of German women-criminals were incarcerated. The author was one of those who were treated in this way. Her heroism, and that of great numbers of her fellow-countrywomen, who refused to flee before the invading Germans, fills one with admiration and respect,—indeed, with reverence. Proclamations were posted everywhere that anyone harbouring an Allied soldier would be shot; yet all over Belgium there were women who never hesitated to give food and shelter to men, perhaps wounded, who had been left behind or who had lost their way during the initial retreat toward the Marne,—women who risked not only their own lives but the lives of those they loved, by so doing."

"The worst of it is", commented the Philosopher, "that even among those who read such a book with sympathy, very few will realize that their own mothers and sisters would be subjected to the same kind of torture, if ever Germany had the chance. I know there are some Germans who would utterly disapprove; but I know also that their protest would count for nothing as against the black devils of hate and cruelty which possess the vast majority of their countrymen, once the war-fever (which in them is a spirit of fear and greed and rapine) runs away with them. In my opinion, one of the things that is suffocating the world at the present time, is a hideous accumulation of unexpiated Karma from the Great War. I grant that the Turks, Kurds and Arabs, and that many of the people of the Balkans, exceeded the Germans in cruelty; but the Germans were supposed to be civilized, the others not; so the moral guilt of the Germans was far greater."

"Were the Turks so bad?" asked the Student.

"They varied. The Anatolian peasant seems to have been a square, clean, brave fighter; but the fact remains that Turkey butchered in cold blood over half a million Armenians, men, women and children, and although it is true that the Armenians would have butchered the Turks, could they have done so, with equal brutality, the further fact remains that out of thirteen thousand British and British-Indian prisoners captured by the Turks at Kut al-Amarah, 'scarce five thousand survived their marches and prisons: they had been clubbed, stripped, mutilated: their bones were strewn in the deserts between Baghdad and Aleppo'. And for such abominations (there were others, far worse) no one was punished,—which clearly left it to be inferred that crimes and barbarities committed even against one's own people, in the course of a war, do not count, and that the criminals and barbarians can repeat their performance with impunity. Yet sin is sin, and God is not mocked. There must come a time either of repentance, or of terrible punishment; and meanwhile, as I have said, it seems to me that all of Nature will protest until that Karma has been worked out, and the equilibrium restored."

"It will take time", said the Ancient; "and meanwhile such things do show, as you suggested, how fierce the struggle is between that which comes down from above, and that which wells up from below; they show also how great is the need to look behind the surface of things, both within ourselves and in the world around us, and to look fearlessly and with detachment, seeking the truth and nothing but the truth. Then—one might almost say, above all else—they show that until divine law, the law of Karma, of retribution, of equilibrium, is recognized as universally omnipotent, and until men and nations learn that to offend against that law and to outrage its spirit is to draw disaster upon themselves,—earth will remain a hell. Meanwhile, Theosophists, if faithful to their trust, must not only strive to do and to be what they would have others do and be, but, with that as basis, must spend themselves to the utmost in an effort to arouse our blind world to the truth which alone can set it free and which alone can give it inner peace." T.

# REVIEWS

*The Beginnings of Man*, by E. O. James; Doubleday, Doran and Company, Garden City, New York; price, $2.50.

Dr. James has undertaken, in a measure with success, a difficult task: to reconcile the conventional view of the origin and evolution of man with what one is constrained to call an almost equally conventional view of religion, as it is understood by a great many orthodox Christians. The first part of his book tells again the tale of modern discoveries in archæology and the antiquity of man, as it has been told by so many writers, like Boule, Keith, Sollas, Osborn and others; most vividly told, perhaps, in Osborn's fine work, *Man rises to Parnassus*, with its noble antiphonal accompaniment from Æschylus. This immensely interesting story Dr. James retells with fidelity, accuracy and an evident enjoyment of its manifold details, yet, it must be said, without any strongly original or creative criticism. He accepts at more than its face value the descent of man from the diminutive, big-eyed *Tarsius*, nocturnal kin of the lemurs, while to most students of Theosophy, this particular view seems a fantastical fairy-tale. He is not critical regarding the Javan Man-ape, *Pithecanthropus;* like many convinced followers of the doctrine of the day, he shows, in his genealogical tree, this problematic Man-ape as originating far earlier than authentic man. This is very convenient for current theories, but the fact seems to be that *Pithecanthropus* belongs to the Pleistocene, and that Piltdown man, with his decidedly "modern" skull, as Keith calls it, belongs to the much older Pliocene. That common inversion, as we have suggested, fits the theory much better than it fits the facts. Nor does Dr. James weigh and consider the likelihood that the so-called "man-like" apes may represent thoroughly retrograde forms, as was long ago suggested by so great an authority as Quatrefages; and it is somewhat hazardous to build arguments on Miocene *Dryopithecus*, since up to the present no skull of *Dryopithecus* has been discovered. Once more, to come nearer to the present, Dr. James appears to accept without question the view that agriculture, and with it "civilization", is only 10,000 years old. The quite recent excavation of unexpectedly ancient cities in the valley of the Indus, with the probability that other cities still more ancient may be found, should teach us caution; we may have to revise our dates. Therefore, we are inclined to think that Dr. James has not brought any original critical power to the first half of his theme. He seems to accept too easily the conventional views.

The same is in a measure true of his study of religion. Thus, he bases a strong plea for Hebrew monotheism on the opening verses of Genesis, quoting the translation of the authorized version: "In the beginning God . . ." But Hebrew scholars say that the first three words of the text, faithfully translated, read: "Primordially the Worshipful Ones moulded . . ." Again, he speaks of the Creator making man "in His image." Here he departs from the text of the authorized version, which reads, "Let *us* make man in *our* image," the subject being the plural form *Elohim*, "The Worshipful Ones." Further, Dr. James makes no effort to compare this ancient cosmogony with the parallel cosmogonies of India, as found, for example, in the *Upanishads*. To leave out these great spiritual records in any general study of religion is to leave the story half told.

Dr. James rests much of his case on what is called "emergent evolution": thus, the spiritual

faculties of man mysteriously "emerged," suddenly transforming his anthropoid predecessor. But, while there is much valuable truth in "emergent evolution," we should face the fact that it is only a description, not an explanation. A man "emerges" from a doorway, a lion "emerges" from a cave, an owl "emerges" from a hollow tree; but in each case the man, the lion, the owl was there, fully equipped, unchanged, except in place, by his "emergence." If we are consistent, we must equally hold that the spiritual faculties of man must have been already existent before they could "emerge"; we must hold that the essential man, the spiritual intelligence, was pre-existent, and, at the right time, entered a fitting vesture.

With what Dr. James has to say, in his closing pages, regarding the spiritual stature and power of Christ, one can heartily agree, even though holding that it is once more only a half-told tale.

J.

*The Earlier Religion of Greece in the Light of Cretan Discoveries*, the Frazer Lecture for 1931 in the University of Cambridge, by Sir Arthur Evans; Macmillan Company, New York, price, $1.20.

Thirty-five years ago the origins of Greek history were still wrapped in impenetrable darkness, and the great civilization of classical Hellas was generally regarded as a miraculous development. Schliemann's excavations at Troy and Mycenæ had testified to a very solid substratum of culture underlying the brilliant productions of the classical period, but, as Sir Arthur Evans points out, Mycenæan Greece was supposed to represent "an exotic and unexplained phenomenon not yet recognized as, in the main, merely an offshoot of a much older culture, stage beyond stage of which could be traced in the 'Midsea' land, where it is now seen to link up the earliest civilization on European soil with that of the Nile Valley and of the Ancient East" (p. 3).

Even the most ardent and most bigoted Hellenists are now forced to admit that the "historical" Greeks, with all their genius, did not create their civilization out of nothing. Their genius, indeed, consisted in their ability to assimilate what was essential in a civilization which had already completed many cycles before they entered the Mediterranean lands as a race of conquerors. The changed view of Greek history has been made possible by the labour and sacrifice of Sir Arthur and others who have revealed, by excavation and by long research, the extraordinary duration and extent of the so-called Minoan culture.

The home of the Minoan culture was Crete, but it had a close connection with Egypt and with the countries east of the Mediterranean. It effectively dominated the Ægean islands and parts of the Greek mainland for many centuries. In his lecture, Sir Arthur describes in detail some of the ritual and votive objects which have been recovered from Minoan tombs or shrines. He indicates the remarkable resemblances between Minoan and Egyptian symbolism, and suggests that many practices of later Greek religion can only be explained as survivals or modifications of Minoan ceremonies.

He compares the cult of the Cretan Mother Goddess to the Mysteries of Adonis and Attis, and remarks that in "the old Cretan worship we seem to discern not only a pervading spiritual essence but something in its followers akin to the faith that for the last two millenniums, has moved the adherents of successive Oriental religions, Iranian, Christian, and Islamic" (p. 37). Some of the characteristic symbols are very suggestive,—the chrysalis and the butterfly, the sacred tree, the obelisk, the double-ax resembling the *tau* or the *swastika*. Sir Arthur reproduces a scene carved on a signet ring from Thisbê, which represents the adoration of the Mother Goddess and her Child by two warriors who bring offerings to the Divinities. "Nothing can be more remarkable than the parallelism that this whole scene presents with the Adoration of the Magi" (p. 35).

Sir Arthur is deeply impressed by the pure and reverent quality of the Cretan religion. "A certain moral ingredient—taken over, it may be, from ancient Egypt—is perceptible in the idea of the weighing of the Soul in butterfly form evidenced by the gold scales from the Mycenæ tomb, and by the scene on the 'Ring of Nestor' where the deceased are led before the Griffin Inquisitor, enthroned before the Goddess. I will venture, indeed, to repeat a conclusion . . . based on the whole range of evidence afforded by the now very considerable mass

of Minoan monuments. From the beginning to the end of Minoan Art, amongst all its manifold relics—from its earliest to its latest phase—not one single example has been brought to light of any subject of an indecorous nature" (pp. 41-42). The same cannot be said of the classical Greeks, even by their most fanatical admirers. V. S.

*Ancient Beliefs in the Immortality of the Soul*, by Professor Clifford Herschel Moore; published in the Series, *Our Debt to Greece and Rome*, by Longmans, Green & Co., 1931; price, $1.75.

In the light of Theosophy, this little volume of 183 carefully worded pages is an unconscious admission of the bankruptcy of modern scholarship and modern understanding. Twenty different theories of Immortality are succinctly presented, from Homer and Orphism to Thomas Aquinas, Christian Mystics and "The Modern Period". "Since it is impossible to determine what influence, if any, the views of India and Eastern Asia have had on the West in the past, I make no mention of them" (p. viii). Egyptian theories of Resurrection and of Immortality are likewise ignored, but without comment; Plato, we are told in summary, "leaves the question unanswered, and the Neoplatonists are no more explicit" (p. 166); the teaching of Thrice Greatest Hermes is omitted as a mere post-Christian syncretism based chiefly on Philo and the Neoplatonists; while we are asked to believe that, thanks to Pythagoras and the Orphics, "as early as the sixth century [B. C.] at least, men had passed from the idea of mere continuance after death to a belief in rewards and punishments hereafter for the deeds done in the flesh" (p. 28). One wonders how a twentieth century Harvard Professor knows so certainly that: "At the best the Orphic confidence in the immortality of the soul rested only on an intuition; it was simply an emotional belief, parallel in a way to the hope cherished by those initiated in the mysteries of Eleusis" (p. 12).

Nevertheless, the volume is useful. The numerous quotations are well-chosen, and could not be assembled without wide reading and labour. A student of Theosophy can pick his own way, and ignore the absurd comments, or use them as a foil to sharpen his own comprehension of a topic of vital importance. There is unfortunately no index. A.

*Angelus Silesius*, translated, with an Introduction by J. E. Crawford Flitch; George Allen and Unwin, 1932; price, 8*s*. 6*d*.

A very interesting Introduction of 97 pages describes a movement on the Continent in the 17th century which seems related to that of the Cambridge Platonists. Individuals and groups in Silesia particularly, revolted by the narrow and rigid dogmatism of Luther, "tended in quietness the flame of the spirit, while Catholics and Lutherans contended for thrones and dominions" (page 17).

Johann Scheffler (1624–1677) was one of those who sought the inner life. He was the son of a Polish Protestant nobleman driven by persecution to Silesia. Under the influence of certain great mystics. St. Gertrude, St. Mechtild, Eckhart, Tauler, and not least, Jacob Boehme (whose writings were published in 1642), he prepared an anthology of their writings to which the Protestant censor refused publication. Chagrin over that disappointment and natural sympathy with the mystics led Scheffler to repudiate the Lutherans as "inexperienced and unversed in the whole body of ancient piety and destitute of the true and living theology" (page 32); he became a Catholic, a priest, and took Angelus Silesius for his name in religion. "Mystics had a traditional leave to warm themselves at the Catholic hearth, even though at times the mistress of the house might have occasion to reprove them for their freedom of speech. Their dialect, strange though it might sound to the orthodox ear, could still be interpreted according to the grammar of faith. A judicious editing, a prefatory gloss, would be enough to warn the unwary reader against a too literal interpretation of the poet's mystical paradoxes" (p. 40). Later, most unfortunately, he developed into a bitterly polemical pamphleteer. There are aspects of his life which suggest Milton, Donne, and Blake. As a young man he put into verse many thoughts from the mystics under the title, *Cherubinic Wanderer*, selections from which, in translation, form the main body of this book. "He was one of that numerous company of spirits who feel themselves to be in exile on the earth and whose chief

concern is to find a way back to their native country. He explored both the Negative Way of Mysticism and the Devotional Way of the Cross. He was responsive to the signals and beckonings of the many travellers who had set out before him on the way to the far country. An arresting paradox from Eckhart, a lightning flash from Boehme, an ecstatic cry from St. Mechtild or St. Teresa, an epigram from Czepko, these were the sparks which, falling upon his inflammable imagination, lit up the momentary visions he engraved in the incisive lines of his verse. He was too much at the mercy of his impulses and enthusiasms to stay to reflect upon the connection of his thoughts or to weave them into a continuous tissue. All the aspiration, all the triumphs and despairs, which are involved in the effort of mysticism to penetrate into the heart of reality, are resumed in him and together constitute the thousand-faceted jewel of the *Cherubinic Wanderer*" (p. 96). C.

*An Indian Monk: His Life and Adventures*, by Shri Purohit Swami; Macmillan and Co., London, 1932; price, 7*s.* 6*d.*

The first half or so of this book, in which the inner as well as the outer life of a Hindu would-be disciple is laid bare, makes wonderful reading. We are given a picture of Indian life at its best,—not a complete picture by any means, because there is no mention of its many evils; but a picture which shows that, in spite of a veneer of Western education, and in spite of her native degeneracy, there still exists in India a substratum of genuine and rare spirituality. The later chapters, in which the author describes his pilgrimages and sufferings, are, in comparison, somewhat wearisome: he becomes a shade too good. We hope, however, that the book will be widely read. It is a challenge to all who call themselves Christians: have they anything to show which compares with this "heathen's" sacrifice and asceticism? Do they desire to love and obey their Master as he loved and obeyed his?

Reading it, should compel students of Theosophy *to think*,—and we need to think. At first, it may seem that the author is really a Theosophist. Without question his book reveals an intense "other-worldliness", which is beautiful in many ways, and a delight after the materialism in the midst of which we live. It needs thought and some discrimination to realize that his idea of the real world is not the same as ours, and that his is more of a *Deva-loka*, a sort of superior Devachan, than the reality of which our present world is a perverted shadow. Without question, too, his tolerance is unlimited, and again it may need reflection to see that, just because it is unlimited, it is not theosophical; for Theosophy teaches us to discriminate, not to swallow everything flat, as if there were no difference between black and white. "I am Brahma, thou art Brahma, all things are Brahma", is his conclusion, as if that settled it, the truth being that that only begins it, no matter how we may wish it were otherwise. His philosophy is based upon a dead-letter interpretation of the Upanishads; it fails utterly to discriminate between "relative unrealities"; it regards the courtesan, and the self-sacrificing mother of a family, as equal manifestations of Brahma, seeing that Brahma alone is; and this means failure to recognize facts, and total inability to apply principles to mundane affairs.

Incidentally, the book confirms our opinion that a literal and external interpretation of the Vow of Poverty puts a premium on self-satisfaction. It becomes too easy for a man to feel within himself: "How humble I am that I, who might be feeding others, beg"; and if a man feels that, or anything like that, his virtues, no matter how many, can only carry him deeper into the pit. Humility is not aware of being humble.

On the other hand, in some of the simplicities, the Swami is splendidly right. Take this (p. 101): "I came to the conclusion that it was sheer ignorance and egoism when men talked about helping Him [God] or helping mankind. When you begin to do good to this world, you presuppose that you are sufficiently wise to understand it, and powerful enough to help it out of its difficulties. Such men profess too much. The world is full of misery. What is the reason? Perhaps those people who want to help are the cause, and, when bad results of their actions appear, they resort to the same despotic benevolence as a remedy. Thus misery is piled on misery, all the product of ignorance and egoism, as the sages said, and as I felt forced to agree. . . . I thought, yes, the world has been created by Him, and He alone is able to help it. Then what business have I to meddle unless He bids me? My first duty is to

know Him, and attain direct communication with Him. In short, I thought I should have His *âdesha*, or mandate, before I did anything for this world."

He quotes a "Mahatma" (all men who are supposed to have found God, are called "Mahatmas" in India) as having said to him (p. 94) that real mysticism is not mystery, but mystery unveiled, and once a mystery is unveiled it no longer remains a mystery but is plain and simple knowledge.

As we have said, the author shows modern Hinduism at its best, and although it is not *the* best, we are thankful that it exists. If there were enough of it, it might antidote the poison of the Indian National Congress. We repeat: a fascinating, thought-provoking book, which we recommend, and for which we are thankful. T.

*War Memories*, by Princess Marie de Croÿ; Macmillan and Co., London, 1932; price, 8*s.* 6*d.*

This book is highly recommended in the "Screen of Time" in this issue of the QUARTERLY. It has not as yet been published in America, because American publishers do not think it would be "popular", and have said so. Probably they are right, as the Princess de Croÿ tells the truth about a subject in regard to which most Americans prefer to hear untruths, or, better, nothing at all. It can be obtained through the Quarterly Book Department for $2.00. If our recommendation could create a sufficient demand for it, New York publishers would soon be competing for the "privilege" of seeing their name on the title-page. Its wide circulation would do a great deal of good. T.

*The Wisdom of Egypt and the Old Testament, In the Light of the Newly Discovered 'Teaching of Amen-Em-Ope'*, by W. O. E. Oesterley, D.D.; London, S.P.C.K.; New York, The Macmillan Co.; 6*s.*

This is an interesting and very suggestive comparison of the relation between an important, newly discovered Egyptian "Wisdom" book, and Proverbs, Deuteronomy, and Psalms. There are numerous passages either verbatim or so closely parallel as to prove that the Hebrew writers knew the Egyptian, or vice versa. Professor Oesterley, assuming the latest date for the Egyptian writer, inclines to emphasize the existence of a general body of early "Wisdom" literature (of the Proverbs type), probably written in Hebrew, from which the known Hebrew writers copied, and from which Amen-Em-Ope borrowed his volume of *Teaching*. Egyptologists, however, unite in attributing priority of authorship to Egypt; and with this general principle *The Secret Doctrine* agrees. The dating adopted throughout is typical of the whole modern tendency to foreshorten ancient history. The ethical teaching is on a level with the best in the Old Testament—a fact not cherished by theologians and devout Biblical scholars. Professor Oesterley has summed up the various views with scrupulous fairness, and his little volume is highly instructive and serves as an excellent introductory exposition. G.

*L'Art Religieux après le Concile de Trente*, by Emile Mâle; Librairie Armand Colin, Paris; $10.00.

Emile Mâle, distinguished member of the Academy and Director of the French School at Rome, has written on religious art in France in the twelfth century, the thirteenth century and at the end of the Middle Ages. This latest book, the fourth of the series, deals with religious art in Europe in the sixteenth, seventeenth and eighteenth centuries.

The religious art of this period is by no means so splendid as that of the preceding centuries, as one realizes sadly when looking at the many illustrations of this book. No one would place "Le Beau Dieu" of Amiens or the "Queen of Sheba" of Chartres on the same plane as Bernini's St. Theresa, or compare Rubens' or Van Dyke's Pietà with the profound and beautiful Pietà of Enguerrand Charenton. However, Mâle does not discuss his subject from the æsthetic point of view, but from that of the ideas, theological and general, which guided the artists of the time. These artists are completely representative of the thought of the age, of the tremendous resistance of the church in the Catholic Reaction, and of its renewed life in the great saints who opposed the Protestant Reformation.

The church and the artists of the Counter Reform meditated upon the ecstasies of the saints in their communion with Christ and the Virgin, upon the miracles of the Sacraments, upon the warning of death and dissolution, upon the courage of the martyrs. Their subjects are in astonishing contrast with their sensationalism, saccharine sentimentality and lack of taste. The term "Jesuit Art" describes the most exuberant baroque. The "Triumph of St. Ignatius" at the Gesù in Rome is wormy with cupids. Alone, some of the Spanish masters, Zurbaran, el Greco, Montañes, rise to the height of a spiritual vision of their subjects.

Nevertheless, the ideas which the poorest of the painters and sculptors pretended to express are worthwhile in themselves, and Mâle's exposition of them sheds floods of light not only upon art, but upon the history of religious thought in Europe. ST. C. LAD.

*Spinoza, Liberator of God and Man*, by Benjamin DeCasseres; E. Wickham Sweetland, publisher, New York, 1932; price $2.00.

*Blessed Spinoza*, a Biography, by Lewis Browne; The Macmillan Company, New York, 1932; price, $4.00.

Last year the three hundredth anniversary of Spinoza's birth was celebrated. One hopes that the revival of interest in his philosophy will bring a truer understanding of it, for Spinoza does not need outspoken homage or admiration as much as *re-valuation*. For centuries he has been misrepresented by enemies and friends alike. No one could have said more clearly what he had to say, but most of his commentators seem to have been incapable of believing that he meant what he said. More than one of his so-called followers has tried to gain favour or publicity for his own ideas by the simple expedient of attributing them to Spinoza. He has been praised and blamed for being an atheist, a naturalistic pantheist, a materialist, a rationalist, a utilitarian, a hedonist; and because his works are difficult to read, it has been generally assumed that he was one or all of these things. But when one does take the trouble to read them, it requires little acumen to discern what he really was. If his words be offered in evidence against the words of his commentators, it becomes apparent that Spinoza was a mystical philosopher, and that the metaphysician who most closely resembles him was Plotinus.

The two works here considered are decidedly better than the average, but in the reviewer's opinion their merits are outweighed by their defects. They may be read with profit by one who has already read Spinoza; but unless the student has this safe-guard of first-hand knowledge, he is certain to get from them some very false notions about the philosopher.

Without doubt, Benjamin DeCasseres has written a stimulating book which has the value of being provocative on every page. With some of his assertions we unqualifiedly agree. Spinoza, like every other "Titan" in the history of thought, was a champion of the divine spirit of Man against the powers which impede its expression, against mediocrity and brutality, ignorance and stupidity and fear. In his own degree and on his own plane, he belonged to the clan of Lucifer and Prometheus. "He liberated God from the dungeons of personal fear and from the images of the grotesque imagination. . . . He found him a Moloch-Father. He left him an omnipresent infinite universality" (p. 31). There is exaggeration here both concerning God, and concerning Spinoza, who was by no means the first of mortals to realize that God was not "an anthropomorphic prolongation of the body, parts and passions of mankind". But the idea that Spinoza was "a son of the Morning Star" would seem to be nearer to the truth, in spite of its hyperbolism, than the commonly accepted notion that he was a Seventeenth Century type of parlour radical. It is true that he was forced into open conflict with the obscurantist forces of his day, specifically represented by the ecclesiastics and theologians. One wonders whether he would not find those same forces to-day represented by other "vested interests", for example, by learned scientific bodies and by those who are endeavouring completely to secularize and to stereotype humanity. "A son of the Morning Star" is no respecter of persons. He struggles with darkness wherever he finds it.

But when DeCasseres comments further upon Spinoza's ideal of the liberation of Man, he falls into a serious error. He assumes that when the philosopher spoke of virtue as synonymous with strength and true happiness, he was anticipating Nietzsche's vision of the Superman. In point of fact, Spinoza and Nietzsche are as far apart as it is possible to be. The "self", for

which Nietzsche sought joy and power, is the lower personality, the actual human ego. The "self" in Spinoza's system is a mode or ray of the Eternal. "The human mind, in so far as it knows itself . . . under the form of Eternity (*sub specie æternitatis*), . . . knows that it exists in God and is conceived through God." . . . One wishes that DeCasseres had not written the chapter on what he calls, with much approbation, Spinoza's "Egotheism", for it inverts the whole sense of the great philosopher's central doctrine, that blessedness consists in complete self-forgetfulness in the knowledge and love of God. It was Spinoza who said that he who truly loves God does not hope that God will love him in return.

Lewis Browne is in no danger of making the same mistakes as DeCasseres, for he is a sober and careful realist. He has accomplished a remarkable feat in writing three hundred and nineteen pages about Spinoza's life, for this life was almost devoid of incident, with the exception of the outstanding episode of his excommunication from Israel. But he has marshalled his facts with skill and has made the maximum use of his material. The most interesting part of the book is concerned with the Jewish environment of Spinoza's early years. Incidentally, Dr. Browne suggests that the young Spinoza was probably much influenced by his studies in the rabbinical academy of Amsterdam, for it was there that he must have become acquainted with the metaphysical genius of Maimonides and Ibn-Ezra, the great Jewish philosophers of mediæval Spain. Also he must have perused the *Zohar* and other Kabalistic scriptures, for which Dr. Browne cannot conceal his scorn, whenever he mentions them; but it is possible that Spinoza may have been more deeply indebted to the *Kabala* than he chose to admit. It is a curious fact that his *Theologico-Political Treatise*, published anonymously in 1670, gave the publisher's name as Henricus Künraht. This was evidently a pseudonym; can it be that Spinoza was thinking of Henry Khunrath, the Sixteenth Century Kabalist?

The virtue of Dr. Browne's work is that it brings into relief the contrast between the brilliant and active inner life of the philosopher and his obscure and monotonous outer existence. Spinoza seems to have deliberately chosen poverty and solitude as fixed conditions of his life because he believed them to be less distracting than wealth and comfort. During his last years at the Hague, he dwelt in the back-room of an attic, earning what little he had to spend by grinding lenses.

There is, however, a grave error of omission in this biography which materially affects its value, and causes the unwary reader to carry away with him a very lop-sided view of Spinoza. What would one say of a biography of Napoleon in which no reference was made to his military or political qualities? Dr. Browne has written a life of Spinoza in which no space is given to any consideration of his mystical genius. If Dr. Browne were one's only source of information about Spinoza, one would assume that there was not the slightest evidence of any mystical substratum in his thought. But it is this mystical substratum which really gives his thought such power, and which distinguishes him from the vast majority of modern philosophers whose axioms are merely guesses and not based upon intuition and experience. A biography which does not even mention Spinoza the mystic, is not really a biography of Spinoza, but of a phantom of the author's imagination which bears the philosopher's name. S. V. L.

*The Golden Sequence, a Fourfold Study of the Spiritual Life*, by Evelyn Underhill; Methuen and Co. Ltd., London, 1932; price, 5*s*.

This is another remarkable book from perhaps the most influential and most helpful writer on Mysticism in the West. Miss Underhill has attempted an exceedingly difficult approach in this latest exposition of the workings of the inner life, because, to deal directly in Western terms with "the Spirit" and things "spiritual", is to enter a field of highly ambiguous terms and very various meanings. Only a person literally steeped in the literature on the Spirit and its workings in so-called Mystical Consciousness, could even have attempted such a book. Christian theology has never succeeded in clarifying its exposition of the Holy Spirit, or even of spiritual experience; and Christian mystics have given accounts apparently so at variance, though based on their own individual "experience",—that the lay reader is usually bewildered and seldom sure that he understands what is meant. Years ago a series of articles in the QUARTERLY attempted to point out some of the keys to a simpler conception of what was

involved in Christian teaching, by applying theosophic principles and the helpful analogies afforded by comparative religious terminology. Miss Underhill seems to have read some books on Theosophy (has she, perchance, read *Through The Gates Of Gold?*), but, living in England, her approach has obviously been unfortunate, and she has never had the advantage of knowing Theosophy as such, stripped not only of its counterfeits, but of its vulgar travesties. Nevertheless, in this volume her whole method and intellectual approach are precisely those of a student of Theosophy, and for this reason, beyond perhaps her earlier contributions, these new "considerations", as she calls them, will be of interest and value to readers of the QUARTERLY. Her wide reading, her wonderful memory for apt quotation, her great command of language, her brilliance of analogy and in illustration, have all served the one purpose of discovering a synthesis, of bringing out the fundamental principles which underlie all the "spiritual" experience of the mystics and the writings of mystical theologians. It is unfortunate that the publisher's jacket should use the phrase "a theology of the Spirit" to describe the book. It suggests a purely mental or intellectual approach. But Miss Underhill has written from her heart—as in her last two booklets—and her intellectual gifts are used to subserve the intense sympathy, almost the yearning she herself feels, and reveals, for the mystical life and its experience. Moreover, in several passages she indicates a growing realization that the detached and bare intellectual vision described by a Plotinus or exalted by a Ruysbroeck, is not necessarily better or "higher" than the more intimate interchange of a Theresa or a Catherine with their Master;—and it is at just this point that lies the difference between experience merely mystic, and chêlaship,—between "the good man and the man who has attained knowledge". "Reality" must include, not exclude, true individuality. "Spirit indwells and penetrates the soul's very fabric as a quiet Love; and it is here, in our ground, that we are to experience the most intimate and transforming realities of Prayer. Here we may come to know by the penetration of the heart, that which we can never understand by the exercise of the mind. . . . The vision of God and the love of God complete each other" (pp. 168-9).

The "Golden Sequence" may be said to begin with a recognition, however dumb and blind, that there is a Spirit, beyond, above, and greater than we are. Miss Underhill illustrates this beginning with a striking story "by Osbert Sitwell, which tells how a traveller in the equatorial forests, hearing strange sounds at night, looked out from his window; and saw in the courtyard, where it was imprisoned, a great anthropoid ape—one of those tragic creatures just verging on the human [Theosophical tradition reverses this: "descended and cast off from the human"] —bowing in solemn adoration before the splendour of the rising moon" (p. 161). The Sequence next brings us to a recognition of "Man Natural and Supernatural"—to the realization that man partakes of two worlds, and has two natures. There is a finite life, and there is Life Infinite. The "Gifts" of the Spirit flow from the Supernatural and Infinite, and gradually transform, or transmute, the finite and "natural" into Itself. Man, therefore, is in a transition stage, and must live a "Twofold Life" until his nature be transmuted. The process of passing, or growing, from finite to Infinite, from natural to Supernatural, is known technically as the Way of Purgation. Man deliberately sets himself to claim his full spiritual inheritance; he cleanses his senses, his intellect, his memory and imagination, his will and love. Throughout this process he learns in ever fuller measure the true meaning of prayer, step by step advancing from Adoration to Communion, and thence to a newly motived and vitalized action—*in* the world, but no longer *of* it. Miss Underhill sums up this section in a fine concluding paragraph: "Thus communion and intercession, adherence and collaboration, can never be separated in experience. They are completing aspects of that total life of prayer, of which the key-word is to be *fiat voluntas tua*. Even while it moves, within the action of God, towards that complete surrender which puts it, in action and in contemplation, wholly at the disposal of the Creative Will, this life moves also to a discovery and fulfilment of its own unique task within the mystical body of praying souls" (p. 177).

When we read, and reread, what Miss Underhill writes with such a sure hand and with so unusual an illumination about Adoration and Communion, one cannot help but wish that something more of the old, old Wisdom Religion and Teaching might be understood by her. If she could transcend the mental outlook and dogmatic horizon of the Western Christian

mystics, how extraordinary would be her contribution. If she could—by meditation upon such phrases as "My Father worketh hitherto, and I work", or "the first-born of many brethren", or "the mysteries of the kingdom of heaven"—arrive at a vision of the superb sweep of human evolution through reincarnation, and especially of the Lodge of "just men made perfect" who, one and all, ceaselessly come in one way or another to seek and to save the lost, and could see how her own insight into the workings of the eternal spiritual "Reality of God" would be enriched by it—could see the differing kinds of mystical experience and communion explained by the differing stages of development, of need, of *self*-consciousness along this tremendous pathway—her whole intellectual grasp of mystical phenomena would be integrated. In any case, students of Theosophy can find in her writings the theosophic method applied with inspiring rectitude within the limits of a broad and enlightened Christian mysticism—and this is saying much. Miss Underhill's zeal is catching, her intellect is stimulating, her guidance may be trusted. M. H.

*La Mythologie Asiatique Illustrée;* Librairie de France, Paris; $10. Translated into English as *Asiatic Mythology;* Harrap, London; 63*s*.

This magnificent work has recently been translated from the French and published in London. It was prepared and brought out by M. Hakin, the *Conservateur* of the Musée Guimet, a Paris Museum dedicated to Oriental Thought, Art and Anthropology. It deals with Persia, India, Tibet, Indo-China, Cambodia, Java, China and Japan, and the mythology of each country is discussed by an authority in that field. It is the only work, so far as we know, which presents such a mass of material in so compact a form. The book is profusely illustrated with photographs, drawings and colour plates.

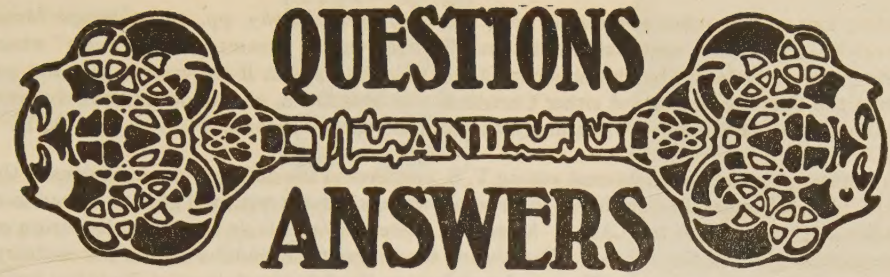
The authors do not attempt to explain the spiritual significance of faiths, myths or legends. They have tried only to give a history of religions and a catalogue of divinities. Thus, their work is of slight inspiration to those seeking spiritual nourishment, but, on the other hand, it is invaluable as a book of reference to all who are interested in Oriental Mythology and Art.

ST. C. LAD.

*St. Augustine's Conversion*, by W. J. Sparrow Simpson, D. D.; London, S. P. C. K.; New York, The Macmillan Co.; price, $3.50.

"The Confessions are commonly read by themselves. But to be fully appreciated they ought to be read in connection with the earlier writings and the fragments of autobiography scattered in other places. It is only in this way that the process of Augustine's development is completely understood. It is wonderful what light the earlier writings throw upon the later, and how the later help to explain the earlier. The Confessions are the crown of all the rest. This is the masterpiece, an amazing self-analysis" (p. 236).

This opening paragraph of Chapter XX summarizes exactly the contribution made by this admirably conceived and interesting book. The author writes as a Christian apologist, and consequently he belittles, for example, Neoplatonism, intending thereby to exalt Christianity —an unfortunate characteristic of Christian polemic. But with this single draw-back, which is not obtrusive, the volume provides a valuable setting for one of the greatest Christian classics, enriching one's whole conception of "the good St. Augustine" (*The Secret Doctrine*, II, p. 476). Q.




QUESTION NO. 375.—*On the assumption that both men were striving for discipleship in some form or other, did Epictetus as a slave, or Marcus Aurelius as an Emperor, have the easier environment in which to work?*

ANSWER.—We may safely assume that once a man has dedicated his life to discipleship—has deliberately set his foot upon the Path—all his environment, life after life, will shape itself in such a way as to test him to the uttermost limit of his capacity to learn and to endure. We have the assurance that no man will be tried *beyond* his strength; but we have been told that "He who does the *best* he knows how and that he *can do*, does enough for us"—no mean accomplishment in the light of what saints and disciples *have* achieved. Epictetus, assuming that he was striving for discipleship, needed exactly the discipline of slavery to develop in him needed qualities. He doubtless at times found his life bitterly hard, but refused to be crushed by it, and so rose to heights of philosophic heroism,—thereby not only making his lot less hard, but establishing himself on a new high level. In the same way Marcus Aurelius must have needed the tests of power, etc., and rose to great attainment by mastering himself in the midst of a peculiarly dangerous environment. Either man might have failed in the other's place; either man, having won self-mastery exactly where he was, would probably have been capable of exchanging places with the other safely—even easily. But a deliberate change of environment to escape the particular difficulties of the one we are in, is only to follow illusion, to complicate Karmic action and the plans of our Master, and to court a reaction which might throw one off one's base. There is no such thing, therefore, as an "easier environment" in discipleship. The road "winds uphill all the way" for each individual; and the hill is known as Calvary, for on its summit is a Cross—the Cross of a final initiation. A.

ANSWER.—Circumstances are a result, not a cause. Success in discipleship depends entirely upon right thinking, feeling, willing, and upon right use of the imagination. Wrong thinking, feeling, willing, and wrong use of the imagination, *must* be eliminated. When a man attributes his failure of yesterday to anyone or anything outside of himself, he adds a worse defeat to the first. If he says, or thinks, "I have tried again and again, and simply can't do it", he removes himself from the Path as no sort of outer failure can remove him. In fact, perhaps the first step in occultism is to become incapable of thinking or feeling, "I cannot", or "It cannot be done". J. A.

QUESTION NO. 376.—*Why is it, if the Christ is recognized as one of the Masters, that the Buddha is given so much more prominence in Theosophical literature?*

ANSWER.—Is this really so? A born and professed Buddhist might complain with as much justice that prominence given to Christian teachings and ethics, as for instance, in some articles in the QUARTERLY, was not in accord with theosophical principles. In following out the second object of The Theosophical Society, namely, "the study of Aryan and other Eastern literatures, religions, and sciences", as a means toward the knowledge of the Wisdom-philosophy, or Religion, room must be found for all, notwithstanding individual prejudices and

predilections. The questioner should read *The Key to Theosophy*, pp. 12-15, where Mme. Blavatsky deals with a very similar question. We are living in a country of the "west" where Christianity is professed by the majority of the inhabitants; but if we were to try and get behind the external theology of either Christianity or Buddhism, we should find the common meeting ground of "Bodhism" (Wisdom), as Mme. Blavatsky puts it. A. K.

ANSWER.—There is much interest among T. S. members in the different great religions of the world. If Christians, they are likely to be somewhat conversant with the biblical accounts of the life and teachings of the Christ. Moreover, there is available an enormous literature on almost every phase of this subject. The life and teachings of the Buddha are, on the contrary, comparatively unknown to the West, and satisfactory English translations of Buddhist scriptures scarce. The accurate and sympathetically understanding translations and commentaries which the QUARTERLY is able to supply, are therefore doubly welcome to a large proportion of its regular readers. Presumably the querent, by the phrase "in Theosophical literature", means "in the THEOSOPHICAL QUARTERLY". C. M. S.

ANSWER.—There are the same great truths at the heart of every real religion. Christians should read what is said of the Buddha and Buddhism for the light which it throws on Christianity. Many students of Theosophy believe that it is not possible to understand one's own religion by studying that alone, just as no one can really understand his own language if that be the only one he knows. The study of the sayings of the Buddha, or of the *Bhagavad Gîta*, or of any of the great scriptures of the world throws much light on the inner meaning of the Gospels. Our very familiarity with the words of the New Testament tends to obscure its meaning, and the same truths may often be seen more clearly when presented in a fresh way and with a different colouring. J. F. B. M.

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## NOTICE

The regular meetings of the New York Branch of The Theosophical Society are held on alternate Saturday evenings, at 64 Washington Mews, which runs from the east side of Fifth Avenue, midway between 8th Street and Washington Square, North. No. 64 is the first Studio east of Fifth Avenue, on the north side of the Mews. The meetings begin at half-past eight, and close at ten o'clock.

During the present Quarter, there will be meetings on,—

January 14th and 28th
February 11th and 25th
March 11th and 25th

Out-of-town members of the Society are invited to attend these meetings whenever they are in New York. Visitors who may be interested in Theosophy are always welcome.